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ON THE

STATE OF EUROPE

BEFORE AND AFTER THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION;

BEING

AN ANSWER

TO

L'Etat de la France à la Fin de l'An VIII.

BY FREDERICK GENTZ,

COUNSELLOR AT WAR TO HIS PRUSSIAN MAJESTY, &c. &c.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

By JOHN CHARLES HERRIES, Esq.

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INTRODUCTION

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

L'ETAT de la France à la Fin de l'An 8, was an anonymous publication at Paris in the autumn of 1800. The Author was not long concealed, and he was generally known to have written under the auſpices and authority of the French Government.

The work itſelf betrayed its origin throughout. It was every where marked by the moſt inveterate enmity to this country; and was evidently written with a view to convert the nations of the continent to the ſame ſentiment. It announced and explained a variety of plans for the gratification of the envy and hatred which it endeavoured to excite; and it ought rather to have been called A Diſſertation on the Neceſſity and

the Means of ruining England, than An Examination of the State of France.

At any other period, ſuch a production, though it might have been amuſing to a very ſuperficial politician, would hardly have excited the attention, much leſs required the anſwer, of a profound and enlightened writer. But it appeared at a time when certain unfortunate and unfounded prejudices againſt this country were at their higheſt pitch; and it was craftily deſigned to inflame that ſpirit of animoſity which could alone give currency to its abſurdities. Upon theſe grounds it acquired a degree of popularity, ſufficient to induce a Pruſſian writer, whoſe talents have before been diſplayed in ſome excellent political works, to undertake the refutation of it.

The following is a tranſlation of this reply of Profeſſor Gentz to Citizen Hauterive: but had the German been only valuable as an anſwer to the French publication, I certainly ſhould have ſpared myſelf the pains of preparing it for the Engliſh

Engliſh preſs. It would have been a very ſuperfluous labour in a country where the pamphlet that gave riſe to it, had excited neither admiration nor argument.

But the merits of Mr. Gentz's work are not confined to the controverſy before him. His *State of Europe* is ſomething more than an occaſional treatiſe: it has an independent and general character. And though the arguments and aſſertions of his adverſary are completely diſpoſed of, yet the ordinary ſpirit and defects of polemical writings have been carefully and judiciouſly avoided: a circumſtance which does him the more honour, as he had received what might be eſteemed juſt provocation from the French writer, who treated him without candour or reſpect in his alluſions to ſome of his former productions.

L'Etat de la France is one continued attack, direct or indirect, upon the rights and intereſts, the credit and conduct, of Great Britain. No argument, no ſemblance of an argument, has been left untried to criminate her politics, and

to detract from her character. It is needleſs to anticipate Mr. Gentz's obſervations on this general ſcope of Hauterive's work; he has condeſcended to analyze ſome of the charges againſt a nation to which he is himſelf a ſtranger; and nothing more is neceſſary to conſute them.

It was more immediately his province to vindicate the *law of nations* againſt a writer who is a principal (becauſe the organ of the French government) in a conſpiracy to ſubvert by fraud, what yet remains undemoliſhed by force; and upon the ruins of the old to eſtabliſh a new ſyſtem, in which an abſolute ſupremacy is to be conceded to France, while England is to be made to "*reſume her ſtation among nations of the ſecond order.*" This Mr. Gentz has completely done; and at the ſame time repelled a ſingular attempt to aſcribe the ſins of France to the miſconduct of Europe, in a manner quite novel, and, I think, peculiar to this author of the eighth year.

From the moment when the preſent government had eſtabliſhed itſelf upon the ruins of the laſt

laſt jacobinical authority, the principles and events of the revolution were no longer themes of praiſe and admiration for the political writers of France. *Liberty and equality* had retired before the bayonets of Bonaparte's grenadiers; democratic tyranny had yielded to the genius and fortune of an aſpiring ſoldier; and the admirers of the change could not celebrate the event without condemning the conduct of the *great nation* during the ten years that preceded it. Hauterive does not defend the revolution; on the contrary, he conſiders it as an evil of the firſt magnitude; but his object is to prove that France is not reſponſible for the miſeries thereby occaſioned to Europe, but that Europe, on the contrary, is the guilty cauſe of all that France herſelf has ſuffered; and he labours to perſuade us that the French revolution, with all its diſaſtrous conſequences, was the fruit of the miſconduct and corruption of the governments of other nations. Whether he has ſucceeded, as he himſelf aſſumes, in his attempt to prove this extraordinary poſition, will be ſeen by the following work, in which Mr. Gentz has contradicted it by a very

able and elaborate review of the State of Europe *before the Revolution.*

It may here be proper to make a few obſervations on a very principal part of Hauterive's book; becauſe it involves a queſtion of the higheſt import to this country, and becauſe it is not diſcuſſed in the anſwer of Mr. Gentz, who has reſerved it for a ſeparate publication, a ſequel to the preſent.

When the *Etat de la France* was produced by an Honourable and Learned Member of the Houſe of Commons in his ſeat *, it was repreſented as aiming at the deſtruction of the exiſting relations of belligerent and neutral powers, and labouring to eſtabliſh a ſyſtem directly hoſtile to the intereſts of England, and contrary to the preſent law of nations.

The conteſt which has been terminated ſo honourably and ſatisfactorily for Great Britain, after a ſtruggle of near fifty years, will be a ſubject of admiration to future ages, when it ſhall

* Dr. Lawrence, on the 5th of March.

have

have been faithfully deſcribed by the pen of ſome impartial hiſtorian.

Europe has been long alarmed, and in one inſtance ſeverely afflicted, by a moſt unjuſtifiable conſpiracy againſt the rights of belligerent powers, againſt the ſpirit and the letter of the law of nations, againſt the ſtipulations of the moſt ſolemn treaties, and againſt the conſecrated uſages of all maritime ſtates. We have ſeen the politics of princes ſtooping to ſerve the avarice of fraudulent traders, and arming themſelves againſt the law which forbids the nefarious ſyſtem of covering actual hoſtility by profeſſed neutrality.

Moderation and firmneſs have conducted Great Britain to a happy termination of the difficulties involving the maintenance of her juſt rights: and we may now look back with a mixture of exultation and regret to the riſe and progreſs of the conteſt.

Let us, in the firſt place, inquire if there be any thing more than mere declamation in Citizen Hauterive's chapter on this ſubject; if there be any truth

truth in his aſſertions, or any reaſon in his arguments. In the courſe of this examination we ſhall have an opportunity of adverting to the character and principal circumſtances of the league which attempted to realize his projects and deſires.

After ſome general obſervations on the ſituation of neutral powers in time of war, which are neither very new, nor very perſpicuous, he proceeds thus :

" I have mentioned the maritime prepondе-
" rance of England; the conſciouſneſs of her
" ſuperiority has given riſe to pretenſions which
" the relative weakneſs of other powers has per-
" mitted her to enforce as rights; whence two
" diſtinct maritime codes, the one acknowledged
" by all Europe, the other inſiſted on by Eng-
" land alone *."

To impute conſummate ignorance to the writer of ſuch a paſſage, would be to carry lenity too

* Page 175.

far.

ſar. He was writing for the French government, and of courſe poſſeſſed better information. Though it be eaſy to gueſs the object, it is very difficult to conceive the aſſurance neceſſary for aſſerting "*that the maritime law inſiſted on by England, is one which ſhe has ſet up in conſequence of her naval ſuperiority.*"

He muſt have truſted to two things: 1ſt, that nobody would read the whole of his book, and 2dly, that all his readers would be utterly ignorant of hiſtory; for a knowledge of hiſtory, or a peruſal of his work, are alike ſufficient to refute his aſſertion. In another place he has taken extraordinary pains to ſhew that the *Navigation Act* is the original cauſe of this fatal preponderance of the Engliſh marine. Now the Navigation Act took place in 1651. He muſt therefore renounce all conſiſtency, or aſſert that the maritime law of England was unknown till near the end of the ſeventeenth century. But the maritime law of England is the maritime law expreſſed and defined in the *Conſolato del Mare*, a work publiſhed in the thirteenth century, and

even

even then ſtated as ancient and eſtabliſhed; explained and commented upon by Grotius *(de Jure Belli & Pacis)*, by Voetius *(de Jure militari)*, and by many other celebrated juriſts who lived *before* the eſtabliſhment of that very ſuperiority which is ſaid to have produced their doctrines. The eminent writers of France and Germany, who have treated the ſubject in the laſt century, have uniformly quoted the above-mentioned as the higheſt authorities. The pretended recent code is almoſt univerſally referred to the *eleventh century:* and its firſt poſitive document is dated by none later than the *thirteenth*; ſo that the maritime law of England was the law of Europe, long before any ſuch extenſion of her commerce, or ſuch naval ſuperiority as could have given riſe to it in the manner here deſcribed.

So much for this ill-digeſted attempt to connect the *maritime law* with the *maritime power* of England.

The Author then expatiates on the advantages of the "*code acknowledged by all Europe*;" *the entire*

entire freedom of neutral commerce in time of war; and we might infer from what he ſays, that England is guilty of the greateſt folly for not adopting it, becauſe ſhe would neceſſarily be the greateſt gainer by it. He then proceeds to obſerve, "France has always given leſs diſturbance to the commerce of neutrals than any other maritime power." This is a round aſſertion; and I only notice it, to obſerve that it is contradicted by very good French authority. *Valin* declares that the ordinances of the French marine went at one time beyond the practice of every other nation, except Spain *, in ſeverity; for they condemned *both* ſhip and cargo, when *either* was the property of an enemy: England can never be accuſed of ſuch rigour.

"France has been the firſt to propoſe at home "and abroad, that neutral commerce ſhould "be freed from all its ſhackles; that cruiſing "ſhould be aboliſhed; and that the commercial "profeſſion, its agents, &c. ſhould for ever be "exempt from violence and hoſtility." France

* Spain only adopted this ſeverity in imitation of France.

has

has not deviated from her ordinary politics in this reſpect :—ſhe has always diſtinguiſhed between the *right* and *expedient*; and has never failed to renounce the former where it could not be combined with the latter. She is perhaps not ſingular in this reſpect; but why talk of her juſtice and generoſity?

It coſt her nothing to make the legiſlative and diplomatic propoſal alluded to in ſuch terms of praiſe by Citizen Hauterive. She proclaimed and preached up the perfect freedom of neutral commerce, at the commencement of the late war, at a time when it was neceſſary to herſelf, and injurious to her rival. But in this ſhe was ſo little ſtudious of conſiſtency, that as early as the 9th of May 1793, ſhe paſſed a decree more ſevere than had yet been ſeen in Europe againſt the trade of neutrals; and afterwards continued to repeal and renew her maritime ſtatutes day after day, as occaſion ſerved for enforcing or relaxing them.

But

But let us go a little farther back in the hiſtory of Europe, and take a brief ſurvey (ſuch as the limits of a Preface will allow) of the principal events connected with this important queſtion. If faithfully made, it will enable us to appreciate the conduct of France as well as of every other power concerned in the attempt to deprive Great Britain of a right ſhe has ſtrenuouſly and ſucceſsfully maintained.

The project of forcibly aboliſhing a practice founded on the cleareſt principles, and conſecrated by long and univerſal aſſent, may be eaſily explained, though it never can be juſtified. As the private intereſts of individuals are prone to break through the regulations of each well-ordered community; ſo the private views of a few ſtates created the attempt to reſiſt, and, if poſſible, to deſtroy, the eſtabliſhed law of Europe. In proportion as the nations of the North adopted the habits, and aſpired to the advantages of commerce, they became impatient to cultivate a wide field of gain diſplayed to neutral ſtates, amidſt the hoſtilities of the principal maritime

ritime powers. This they might have done with conſiderable profit to themſelves, and without infringing the rights, or injuring the intereſts, of any of the belligerent nations. But the ſpirit of avarice knows no bounds; and the juſt reſtraints, impoſed by the law of nations, were found too narrow for its ſpeculations. The neutrals were not ſatisfied with that fair and honourable extenſion of their commerce which was opened to them as often as a ſtate of warfare reſtricted the trade and diverted the navigation of the countries engaged in it; they required more; they inſiſted on the liberty of carrying their tranſactions beyond the bounds of neutrality; of acting in concert with either party without contravention from the other, by ſupplying all the articles neceſſary to the proſecution of the war; and thus of becoming, as it were, parties to it on either ſide, according to their immediate intereſts, without being ſubject to its dangers or difficulties.

It would be abſurd to enter into any diſcuſſion of ſuch pretenſions upon the principles of

natural juſtice, and they are completely contrary to eſtabliſhed law. The thirſt of gain, however, excited very formidable attempts againſt both; and it has devolved entirely upon the nation immediately intereſted in the maintenance of them to repel the aggreſſion upon the rights of all. The eighteenth century has ſeen a confederacy calling itſelf the Armed Neutrality, the object of which was no other than to enforce theſe innovations, and to introduce a ſyſtem utterly incompatible with every principle of juſtice. A brief review of the riſe and progreſs of this confederacy will throw ſome light upon its character and motives.

The Pruſſian flag was ſcarcely known in the commercial world, when it began (about the year 1746) to be diſtinguiſhed by a moſt flagrant proſtitution of its neutral character, being almoſt wholly engaged in the very profitable practice of covering the ſhipping and goods of the enemy then at war with Great Britain. This was perhaps more lucrative than any other branch of buſineſs at that time within the reach

of the Pruſſians: it certainly was more lucrative than honourable. The vigilance of the Britiſh navy in ſome degree diminiſhed the profits of theſe ſpeculators; and in many inſtances they were condemned by the tribunals of this country, which, according to the law of nations, confiſcated the veſſels or cargoes of the enemy wherever they were detected. It is needleſs to add, that theſe proſecutions were all carried on with that ſtrict impartiality which ſo peculiarly diſtinguiſhes every court of juſtice under the Britiſh conſtitution. If either party had cauſe to complain, it was ſurely that which was compelled to uſe ſuch vigilance, and adopt ſuch proſecutions, in defence of its rights and intereſt. In the year 1752, however, the Pruſſian miniſter preſented a memorial from his court, complaining of the injury ſuſtained by Pruſſian ſubjects from the conduct of our cruiſers, and the proceedings of our maritime tribunals: tranſmitting, at the ſame time, the ſentence of a commiſſion appointed at Berlin for the inveſtigation of theſe grievances; and informing the court of St. James, that if they were not otherwiſe

wiſe redreſſed, his Pruſſian Majeſty would take indemnity by the ſtoppage of the debts due to individuals in this country, and aſſigned upon the dutchy of Sileſia. This memorial is rendered very remarkable by its being the firſt public profeſſion of a principle, which has ſince been made the baſis of the hoſtile league called the Armed Neutrality: the Pruſſian commiſſioners aſſume the propoſition, that "*free ſhips make free goods,*" as the groundwork of all their proceedings.

This affair created conſiderable alarm throughout the nation. The memorial was anſwered by the Britiſh miniſtry in a firm though moderate tone, and in a very full and explicit manner. The principles advanced were refuted by an appeal to the higheſt authorities and to numerous treaties, which confirmed the very reverſe as an eſtabliſhed rule, either by explanations of it, or exceptions to it; and the juſtice and propriety of the proceedings here were ſo ably demonſtrated as to leave no room for the ſlighteſt

doubt upon the ſubject. The King of Pruſſia renounced his pretenſions.

This queſtion appears to have remained at reſt from that time until the year 1780; at leaſt the uniform practice of the Engliſh navy, and the deciſions of our courts, were not publicly objected to. At that period it was revived, and a much more formidable attempt was made to ſubvert the exiſting law of nations, and to aſſert a principle directly hoſtile to the welfare of Great Britain.

We have nothing here to do with the ſecret intrigues and cabals which preceded and determined the manifeſto addreſſed by Ruſſia* to all the maritime powers of Europe. Whatever might be the immediate cauſe of it, it would moſt probably never have appeared, had not the ſituation of the ſeveral belligerent powers preſented a very favourable opportunity for introducing the new maritime code which it went to eſta-

March 1780.

bliſh.

bliſh. It announced a convention between the ſtates of Ruſſia, Sweden, and Denmark (afterwards acceded to by Pruſſia), entered into for the purpoſe of maintaining what was called the rights of neutral powers. The rights thus arrogated, amounted to nothing leſs than an unlimited freedom of commerce; a liberty of trading without any reſtriction whatever, with and for any or all of the belligerent powers in time of war; of ſupplying them with articles till then forbidden by the maritime law of Europe; and, in ſhort, of adding to the diſtreſſes or facilities of either of the contending parties at their pleaſure: thus requiring that every nation ſhould conſent to further their views of gain, though abſolutely contrary to its own intereſts, and in utter defiance of every natural and poſitive law of nations.

The manner in which this declaration was received by the ſeveral courts to which it was addreſſed, was a new proof that policy has little to do with juſtice. The anſwer of the court of Verſailles is the firſt inſtance of what Citizen

Hauterive extols as the *efforts of France to promote a more equitable ſyſtem of maritime law in Europe.* The practice of France was as ſeverely condemned, her rights were as unqueſtionably attacked in this communication, as were thoſe of England, Spain, and Holland. But the miniſtry of Spain, Holland, and France, received and replied to it in a manner that ſhewed how little it was then their intereſt to maintain thoſe rights. They were little leſs than aſtoniſhed at the amazing political wiſdom of the court of Peterſburgh; and France in particular was highly gratified to behold the *congeniality* of ſentiment, and the *ſimilarity of opinion*, which had induced the Empreſs of Ruſſia to adopt views, and proſecute plans, which had ſo long occupied the French court, and were the only cauſe of its engaging in the preſent war! The plain truth of the matter is, that the powers then at war with England, were eager to ſeize an opportunity of adding to the diſtreſſes of their enemy, by renouncing a ſyſtem, of which the breach happened at that moment to be more advantageous to them than the obſervance. They were

were well aware what would be the conduct of Great Britain on the occaſion; and they hoped to ſee Ruſſia added to the liſt of our enemies. It is evident that the meaſure was, at that time, injurious and hoſtile to England alone. In the midſt of her unfortunate diſſenſions with her colonies, ſhe had been attacked by France and Spain; who, on an occaſion ſo favourable to their views, hoped to degrade, if not to ruin her. She maintained the conteſt with a dignity and force which aſtoniſhed the world; her energies increaſed with her dangers and difficulties; and her navy, riſing even beyond its former greatneſs, baffled the military efforts, and diſtreſſed the commercial navigation, of her enemies. No wonder then that her opponents readily acceded to a plan which was to wreſt from Britain one of the principal means of annoying them; which was to facilitate their operations by procuring them numerous ſupplies cut off by the vigilance of the Britiſh cruiſers; and which was to check the ſuperiority of Great Britain, where alone ſhe was ſuperior. Such were the motives of a conduct which is now impudently

aſcribed to a ſenſe of juſtice, and a love of right.

The then embarraſſed ſituation of this country prevented its government from reſenting the hoſtile proceedings of the northern powers, as they would otherwiſe have done: avoiding the diſcuſſion of the novel principles of the confederacy, they contented themſelves with referring to the juſtice and moderation hitherto manifeſted in the conduct of the Engliſh nation, and their firm reſolution to maintain their rights with the ſame unalterable diſpoſition; reminding the confederates of their reſpective alliances and treaties with Great Britain, which no proceeding on her part had given them the ſmalleſt reaſon to violate or annul.

This convention was, however, in reality, only a temporary meaſure; being profeſſedly concluded for the duration of the then exiſting war. But it was declared at the ſame time, "that it ſhould ſerve as a baſis for all engagements which conjunctures might render it neceſſary to contract

contract for the future, and on account of any new maritime war; and that it ſhould be regarded as a law in matters of commerce and navigation whenever there ſhould be a queſtion of appreciating the rights of neutral nations." The King of Sweden was extremely deſirous of ſeeing theſe principles eſtabliſhed upon a more permanent footing by the general conſent of Europe; for which purpoſe he urged the propriety of a congreſs in which the ſeveral concerns of the belligerent and neutral powers might be examined and defined; being ſolicitous that the war ſhould not be terminated, and with it the northern convention, without the previous interference of the neutral powers for the eſtabliſhment of a permanent maritime code of laws.

Thus the armed neutrality was conſidered, even by thoſe who were parties to it, as an innovation in the law of nations; and the rights they aſſumed were conceived to require a higher ſanction than the ſtipulations of a partial confederacy. To obtain this, was the wiſh and endeavour of the King

King of Sweden; but he was diſappointed. The belligerent powers made ſeparate treaties of peace, and the maritime convention was ſuffered to expire without further diſcuſſion, and without any meaſure for perpetuating its proviſions.

How far the parties to this league were actuated by that ſenſe of juſtice held forth in all their public declarations on the ſubject, may be eaſily ſeen from the conduct of one of them in the very firſt inſtance of its becoming a belligerent power, and, of courſe, entitled to exerciſe the right which it had oppoſed when England was in that ſituation. This happened in 1790, when a war broke out between Sweden and Ruſſia. We have ſeen that the former of theſe powers was particularly active in the project for aboliſhing the practice of ſearching neutral traders, and confiſcating the property of an enemy found on board. But that was at a time when Sweden was a neutral, and England a belligerent power. The caſe was now reverſed; England was at peace, and Sweden was engaged in war. And behold, the full value of the right which had

lately been conteſted, its juſtice and validity, were now acknowledged and maintained by Sweden. Engliſh veſſels navigating the Baltic, and bound to the ports of Ruſſia, were detained and viſited by the Swediſh cruiſers, whoſe government even increaſed the liſt of contraband, ſo lately and ſo loudly complained of, by the addition of ſome articles (money and proviſions, for example) till then not included in it.

How were the enemies of England diſappointed in their hope of ſeeing the armed neutrality revived at the commencement of the following war! The firſt and moſt powerful ſupporter of the principles upon which it was founded, was compelled by the conduct of France to abandon its neutrality. Ruſſia, though ſecured by her ſituation from the immediate aggreſſion of the anarchiſts, was forced by their inſults and provocations to partake of the indignation, and in ſome degree of the alarm, that agitated the more neighbouring nations. She acceded to an alliance for preſerving the tranquillity of Europe, and perhaps reſtoring peace to France; and in the capacity of a belligerent power, ſhe renounced the principles of the armed

armed neutrality, and ſtood forward to practiſe and enforce a right againſt which ſhe had lately contended. Her admirals were inſtructed to uſe every means of obſtructing the commerce of the common enemy, and to confiſcate his property wherever it might be found on the high ſeas, without regard to the protection of a neutral flag. Thus the new maritime code was ſupplanted by the law of nations, in the practice of the very power with whom the northern confederacy had originated.

The rulers of France had now ſucceeded by their unremitted endeavours, their brutal inſults, and their unprovoked aggreſſions, to involve their country in war with every power in Europe that poſſeſſed a territory worth plundering, or a conſtitution worth ſubverting. England, with evident reluctance on her part, had been added to the number; and, from her peculiar ſituation and reſources, ſoon became a principal in the bloody conteſt which deſolated Europe. But how was England to be involved in the miſeries inflicted on the nations of the continent? How was this proſperous iſland, the abode of peace, tranquillity, and happineſs, to be converted into a wil-

derneſs

derneſs of blood and ruin? A happy conſtitution, adminiſtered with vigilance and wiſdom by a limited authority, promiſed no ſucceſs to the principles of France; and Nature had oppoſed inſurmountable obſtacles to her arms. Republican rapacity beheld with rage our fertile fields, our rich and populous cities, our crowded ports, and all the valuable productions of our induſtry, inacceſſible to her inſatiable thirſt of blood and plunder; revolutionary fury was raiſed almoſt to madneſs by the aſpect of our ſecurity and happineſs; and the ſpeeches and writings of the Convention and its agents are replete with the bittereſt reproaches againſt England, as the moſt formidable and hated opponent of one of its "*ſublime vocations, the diſorganization of Europe**."

The power and proſperity of England were therefore to be attacked in a more circuitous way

* *Camille Deſmoulins*, in reply to Briſſot.—And is this what Hauterive alludes to when he ſays "that the conduct of France at the time when ſhe was incapable of framing her meaſures upon the principles of deliberate prudence, is a proof that her politics are *inſtinctively* in uniſon with the intereſts, the independence, and proſperity of all nations?"

than

than the poſſeſſions of *Spain*, *Auſtria*, and *Pruſſia*. They were not expoſed to the direct invaſions by which *Holland*, *Belgium*, *Switzerland*, *Italy*, &c. were to be deſolated. Her navy and commerce were to be humbled; and for this purpoſe the principles of the armed neutrality were to be revived, and a maritime coalition was to be formed againſt her.

Theſe objects were purſued with indefatigable zeal; with an ardour, perſeverance, and uniformity, which aſtoniſh when we conſider the number and variety of the factions that ſucceſſively aſſumed the reins of empire. Nothing was omitted that negotiation or intrigue could effect, to induce the neutral maritime ſtates to embrace this ſyſtem of hoſtility to England. They were ſucceſſively exhorted, and cajoled, and threatened, and at length perſecuted to favour the views of France; while at the ſame time, numberleſs publications leſs celebrated than that now before us, were executed in the ſame ſpirit, and diſſeminated with the ſame intention. In ſhort, our Author himſelf

himſelf tells us, " what France has hitherto done, is the *maximum* of what ſhe has been able to do for the eſtabliſhment of a new code of maritime law *."

Though we cannot but ſmile at the idle attempt to aſcribe this conduct and theſe efforts to the prodigious *impartiality* and *benevolence* of the demagogues of France; yet I think no Engliſh writer would depart ſo far from ſenſe and decency, as to load them with as much invective for endeavouring to ſubvert the law of nations, as Citizen Hauterive has laviſhed againſt this country for ſtrenuouſly maintaining it. Virulence and abuſe are often ſymptoms of weakneſs in matters of controverſy; an unneceſſary diſplay of words betrays a want of argument: what then are we to infer from the abuſive *verbiage* of the preſent Author? At the end of his modeſt propoſal of a new ma-

* " Ce que la France a fait eſt le *maximum* de ce qu'elle a pu faire juſqu'à ce jour pour l'etabliſſement du code public maritime."

ritime

ritime code, he adds, " I am aware of all the obſtacles that England would oppoſe to the introduction of ſuch wiſe regulations: every thing that is wiſe muſt be contrary to the principles ſhe profeſſes; every thing that is juſt muſt be in oppoſition to the rights ſhe inſiſts upon *."

Theſe expreſſions require neither refutation nor comment; they only ſerve to ſhew the temper of the writer. A general and unqualified cenſure is ſurely no argument; a diſputant cannot advance his cauſe by calling his adverſary fool or villain.

To return to the intrigues of France: they were not ſucceſsful. The neutral powers of the North were either unable or unwilling to ſecond her views. A ſtrict neutrality was the profeſſed object of their deſires; and a treaty was concluded in March 1794, between Denmark and Sweden,

* " Je ſais tout ce que des lois auſſi ſages doivent rencontrer d'obſtacles de la part d'Angleterre: tout ce qui eſt ſage eſt contraire à ce qu'elle etablit en principe; tout ce qui eſt juſte eſt en oppoſition, avec ce qu'elle erige en droit."

by no means favourable to the deſigns of the republicans. In this convention, all idea of innovation was formally diſclaimed; and the two powers declared their object to be the maintenance of former treaties, and the exiſting law of nations. All this was contrary to the views of France; but the conduct of thoſe powers did not ſo much concern her as that of the United States of America.

In a plan for deſtroying the commerce of this country, and undermining the foundation of the Britiſh navy (the moſt formidable bulwark of Europe againſt the hoſtile attempts of France), the co-operation of America was of the greateſt conſequence. As a commercial nation, America ſtood next in importance to Great Britain, though far behind her; a very conſiderable part of her ſhipping was employed in the trade with England; ſhe poſſeſſed a more extenſive commercial marine, and more ſkilful navigators, than any other of the neutral powers; her harbours were numerous and excellent, and in the vicinity of our Weſt Indian poſſeſſions. If, therefore, they

could have perſuaded the Americans to aſſert the new ſyſtem of maritime law, or, in other words, to join in a conſpiracy againſt this country, they expected to have given a ſevere blow to the reſources of Great Britain; and by converting the commercial marine of their allies into a naval force, they hoped to injure or deſtroy one of the ſources of our wealth, and to deprive our induſtry of one of the principal fields for the diſplay of its productive powers. It is eaſy to perceive that ſuch a rupture would have been infinitely more prejudicial to the *United States*; and its promoters could not but be aware of all its fatal conſequences to the power they were endeavouring to impel headlong to its own ruin, in order to ſerve their purpoſes. But ſuch conſiderations appear never to have had much weight with the French government; the fate of its allies has always been made ſubſervient to its own intereſts. And yet we are told that the "*politics of France are inſtinctively in uniſon with the happineſs and independence of all nations.*" Twenty years ago ſuch an aſſertion would have been termed extravagant and ridiculous; at the preſent time it would

would be difficult to find a name for it. It has been boldly made in the face of experience, and in ſhameleſs contradiction to the evidence of facts; facts of which the remembrance is yet freſh, and of which the traces are, perhaps, for ever indelible. A ſatire upon the judgment of the world, it is a groſs and ungenerous inſult to the humbled nations, who, after having been plundered under the maſk of friendſhip, are retained in a ſtate of vaſſalage, while they are mocked with the title of allies.

Happily for America, her government proved ſuperior to all the artifices and intrigues of France; and her ſituation protected her from the uſurpations which the republicans had every where elſe effected by force of arms. She wiſely declined all participation in the glories and felicity of Belgium, Holland, Spain, Italy, &c. of whoſe union, or connexions with the Great Nation, *Hauterive* ſpeaks in ſuch terms of rapturous admiration; and ſhe firmly reſiſted every attempt to force upon her what ſhe had refuſed to yield to ſolicitation. On the other hand, no means were neglected to

enſure her choice or obedience: the hiſtory of thoſe proceedings is in the memory of every one; we have only here to do with them as far as they form a part of the labours of France in the eſtabliſhment of the new maritime code, concerning which the Author before us has ſpoken ſo falſely, and reaſoned ſo unwarrantably. The beſt reply to his ſtatements and declamations may be extracted from the memorials preſented to the French government by the American miniſtry, and by the elaborate account of his conduct rendered by the Preſident to Congreſs, when, after four years of unſucceſsful negotiation and intrigue, *France* had proceeded to open violence, and left no alternative to the *United States*, but that of war with France or England. Theſe papers afford the beſt comment upon the conduct of the defenders and oppoſers of the law of nations. Proceeding from a country whoſe politics have always been ſuppoſed more favourable to France than England, and who at that particular time had conceived ſome cauſe of reſentment againſt the latter, no Frenchman can have reaſon to complain of their partiality. They will ſufficiently expoſe the

falſehood of our Author's ſtatements with regard to the origin, as well as the juſtice, of the maritime practice of England.

Firſt, what does Citizen Hauterive ſay of the origin of this practice? Theſe are his words: "I have called this law the maritime law of England, becauſe it has originated in the maritime wars of the eighteenth century, and that the maritime wars of the eighteenth century have all been excited, protracted, and directed by England *."

The executive government of America, however, did not think ſo: they declare, at the end of their note to *Citizen Adet*, in November 1796, "the captures made by the Britiſh of American veſſels having French property on board, are warranted by the law of nations. The force and operation of this law was contemplated by France and the United States, when they formed

* For the complete refutation of this account of the origin of the wars of the laſt century, ſee any hiſtorian, French, German, or Engliſh.

their treaty of commerce, and their ſpecial ſtipulation on this point was meant as an exception to an univerſal rule; *neither our weakneſs nor our ſtrength have any choice when the queſtion concerns the obſervance of a known rule of the law of nations.*

Hauterive does not ſcruple to aſſert, " ſuch is the maritime law which the ſtates of Europe (the one by its *perſeverance*, the reſt by their *paſſiveneſs*) have, as it were, conſecrated; and to the reform of which, France calls the attention of all nations, and invokes the wiſdom of all governments."

Now in a note from the American envoy to the French government, it is ſtated, " Vattel, b. iii. 115. ſays poſitively, ' *that effects belonging to* ' *an enemy found on board a neutral ſhip, are ſeizable* ' *by the rights of war.*' But it is deemed unneceſſary to multiply citations to this point, becauſe France herſelf is ſuppoſed to have decided it in her Maritime Ordonnance of the year

1744,

1744 *. Enemies goods, in neutral bottoms, are declared liable to ſeizure and confiſcation. It will not be contended that France continued in a long courſe of practice and legiſlation, oppoſed to her own opinion of the laws of nations. It muſt then be conſidered as the opinion of France, that, *under the law*, neutral bottoms afford no protection to the goods of an enemy, &c." The following remarkable paſſage occurs in the ſame memorial, and preſents a ſtriking contraſt to the declamation of the French writer, againſt what he calls the maritime law of England: "The deſire of eſtabliſhing univerſally the principle, that neutral bottoms ſhall make neutral goods, is perhaps felt by no nation on earth more ſtrongly than by the

* Many more early ordonnances to the ſame effect might have been quoted: particularly, the celebrated one in 1681, which defines the principle, and aſſerts the practice, ſaid by Mr. Hauterive to have originated in the wars of the eighteenth century, and the policy of England. This ordonnance of France was copied by Spain in 1718, and the one and the other were only confirmations of the uniform practice of both powers from the earlieſt times; yet the whole ſyſtem is ſaid to have been produced by the *maritime preponderance of England in the eighteenth century!* Hauterive could not be ignorant of theſe things.

United States. Perhaps no nation is more deeply intereſted in its eſtabliſhment. But the wiſh to eſtabliſh a principle is eſſentially different from a determination that is already eſtabliſhed. The intereſts of the United States could not fail to produce the wiſh; their duty forbid them to indulge it when deciding on a mere right. However ſolicitous America might be to purſue all proper means tending to obtain for this principle the aſſent of all, or any of the maritime powers of Europe, ſhe never conceived the idea of obtaining that conſent by force. The United States will only arm to defend their own rights: neither their policy nor their intereſt permits them to arm, in order to compel a *ſurrender of the rights of others.*"

Thus did the Americans decline the invitations, reſiſt the threats, and refute the principles by which the French government unremittingly laboured to draw them into a conſpiracy againſt the commercial intereſts of Great Britain, and of courſe to produce a rupture between the two powers. The *magnanimous, diſintereſted* policy of France

France was evinced in the mean time by her acting herſelf upon the very principle ſhe affected to condemn, and ſhe carried the exerciſe of a right which ſhe beheld with jealouſy in others, ſo far as to violate the ſolemn treaties by which ſhe had renounced the practice with reſpect to particular ſtates, always proving, according to Mr. Hauterive, "that the politics of France are inſtinctively allied with the intereſts of the independence and proſperity of all nations *."

But in order to illuſtrate the truth of what I have here ſaid, and to ſhew what credit is due to Hauterive's aſſertions about the *inſtinctive* politics of France, let us appeal to another French writer of the eighth year. The following paſſage is extracted from RŒDERER'S "*Dix Huit Brumaire*;" and I avail myſelf the more readily of this teſtimony, becauſe the language is ſo ſtrong, and the cenſure ſo unreſerved, that I ſhould have avoided ſaying ſo much myſelf (though perfectly

* "Que la politique Françaiſe ſe lie par ſon inſtinct ſeul aux interets de l'independance et de la proſperité de tous les peuples."

aware

aware of the facts, and convinced of the truth of what he ſays), leſt I might have been ſuſpected of invidious exaggeration under the influence of national prejudice. This publication is likewiſe conſidered as official; for the writer occupied a diſtinguiſhed place in the French government. Theſe are his expreſſions:

" Look at the Batavian, Helvetic, and Ciſalpine republics! What has been the conduct of France towards thoſe countries? What has ſhe given them, but anarchy, rapine, and devaſtation?

" The various changes made in the governments impoſed upon them, and the troubles inſeparable from ſuch tranſitions, have diſguſted them in a great meaſure with liberty itſelf; and if we do not haſten, by a protection equally liberal and judicious, to repair the wrongs inflicted on them, the nations on which we have beſtowed a repreſentative conſtitution, may ſoon learn to regret the fetters we have broken for them.

" It

" It is therefore beyond all doubt that theſe countries have been rendered inimical to us by the exceſſes of which we have been guilty toward them : while on the other hand, the French republic has committed a ſtill greater error in her conduct toward the neutral ſtates.

" Nothing could be more conducive to excite enemies againſt us than our horrible ſyſtem of legiſlation *(notre legiſlation horrible)* with regard to the navigation of neutral, and even of friendly and allied powers. It is the depredations committed by French privateers that have principally contributed to produce the rupture between France and America.

" At the beginning of our revolution, the United States were among the firmeſt of our allies, the moſt faithful of our friends. As ſoon as it was perceived that the Congreſs no longer inclined in favour of France, the uninformed amongſt us raiſed a clamour againſt the Americans, accuſing them of having ungratefully forgotten the blood we had ſhed, and the treaſure

we

we had ſpent, to aſſert their independence : but theſe perſons muſt have been ignorant of the enthuſiaſm which our revolution at firſt produced in America ; of the rejoicings which were made to celebrate our triumphs over tyranny, and of the tranſport with which the patriots of this country were received in thoſe climates. It was not till the rage for univerſal deſolation became our only ſyſtem, till we had conceived the project of ſowing diviſion among the Anglo-Americans ; till our privateers, inſtead of reſpecting their commerce, had impudently plundered them of their property ; it was not till then that theſe friends, ſo much diſpoſed to ſerve us, were naturally inclined to withdraw their affections from us. The robberies committed by our pirates, deſtroyed a predilection which we might eaſily have improved ; a harmony which would have been ſo advantageous to us, if we had known how to preſerve it.

" The *Daniſh* flag was ſubjected to perpetual vexations and affronts ; and it is very remarkable, that notwithſtanding the intereſt which prompted

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us to conciliate the *King of Pruſſia*, the flag of that monarch was as little afforded as the reſt. Had he been in want of a pretext for quarrelling with us, our privateers would have furniſhed him a thouſand; their depredations on the ſubjects of this ſtate were carried to ſuch an exceſs, that Mr. Sandos, the Pruſſian miniſter, was at length obliged to renounce the buſineſs of negotiating concerning prizes at ſea, on account of the little ſucceſs that attended his remonſtrances. The charge of ſuch fruitleſs proceedings was tranſferred to a perſon in an inferior capacity.

" Such has been our conduct towards the neutral powers; but we did not ſtop there: we proceeded with ſtill greater violence and rapacity againſt our *ally*, our *friend*, the *Batavian republic.* It was not enough that ſhe had herſelf facilitated our invaſion of her territory; it was not enough that ſhe had received a form of government from our hands; it was not enough that ſhe had paid us *immenſe ſums by way of indemnification for the trouble of conquering her*; it was not enough that ſhe had ceded to us a part of her poſſeſſions, and had

had engaged to feed and clothe a conſiderable French army; it was not enough, in ſhort, that ſhe had quarrelled with England on our account, and that the rupture had led to the annihilation of her commerce, without which Holland is an empty name; it was not enough that her miſerable inhabitants, in order to furniſh the Batavian reſcriptions, granted for the ſervice of the French people, and the payment of its armies, had for the two laſt years been compelled to pay *the half of their income, and the tenth part of their property*; in addition to all this, it was neceſſary that the cruiſers of France ſhould ſeize the few ſmall veſſels they yet ventured to ſend to ſea, even in their own roads, even under their own cannon. Did they ſend ſupplies of grain to their colonies, in order to victual them, and to prevent their falling into the hands of the Engliſh through abſolute want of proviſions; French privateers intercepted theſe ſuccours, and the veſſels were declared good prize, according to the vexatious laws enacted on this ſubject, and of which the application was often pronounced in the provincial tribunals,

bunals, by judges immediately concerned in the privateers themſelves." Page 164—170.

This paſſage, upon which we may now fairly reaſon, ſince no man would attempt to object to the ſentence which the French have officially pronounced upon themſelves; this paſſage ſuggeſts two important obſervations immediately applicable to our preſent ſubject: 1ſt, That the clamour of France againſt the maritime practice of England, being moſt loud at the very period when ſhe herſelf was guilty of the greateſt enormity and injuſtice, not in the uſe, but the abuſe of the ſame rights on which it was founded; there could not be the ſmalleſt reaſon to ſuſpect that they proceeded from juſt or honourable motives; the powers to whom they were addreſſed, muſt have perceived that they were the offspring of private hatred, and had nothing to do with public good. 2dly, That if the oppoſition which was afterwards ſet up to our rights by the northern ſtates, had really been founded upon the motives openly aſſigned to it, it is inconceivable why they did not long before that time produce a ſimilar

a ſimilar confederacy againſt the inſults and piracies of France. How could they patiently ſubmit to theſe illegal depredations during ten years, without arming to repel them, and at the end of that period announce a league for the purpoſe of forcibly oppoſing the legal proceedings of England? It will ſurely be found impoſſible to juſtify ſuch conduct. It can never be ſhewn to be conſiſtent.

At the time when Hauterive publiſhed his work, the hopes of France were revived by what was paſſing in the North: and the book itſelf is one of the many means they had recourſe to in order to improve the favourable opportunity, and to kindle the ſpark into a flame. I think every man who has read it, will allow, that, however great the difficulty of recommending a bad cauſe, it might have been done more ingeniouſly. That ſuch a medley of vague aſſertion, and intemperate declamation, ſhould have been ſo much read, and in any degree admired, is a ſtrong proof of the violence of thoſe prejudices which the jealouſy and envy of other nations, inflamed by the writings

tings and intrigues of our enemies, had excited againſt us.

Some circumſtances perfectly foreign to all maritime concerns, gave a very unexpected, and, it may well be ſaid, a very unnatural turn to the politics of a great northern power, after the concluſion of the campaign of 1799, in which its troops had acted ſo honourable a part, and rendered ſuch eſſential ſervice againſt the common enemy.

Upon the firſt ſuſpicion of a diſagreement between England and Ruſſia, every engine in the hands of France was put in motion to inflame the ontroverſy, and widen the breach. But it would be fruitleſs to endeavour to explain the motives and trace the progreſs of a revolution which depended on a mind ſo ſingularly conſtructed as that of the late Emperor. The moſt intimate alliance was ſuddenly ſucceeded by the moſt furious hoſtility.

He looked around him for the means of injuring his former friends; and the armed neutrality was again announced to the world.

Some pretext, however, was neceſſary to ſerve as a foundation for the new northern convention, whoſe object was profeſſedly ſimilar to that of the old. It was expedient to create ſome ground of complaint againſt this country, to give it a colour of juſtice and neceſſity.

For this purpoſe a Daniſh frigate was appointed to convoy ſome merchantmen of that nation, and the Captain was inſtructed to reſiſt any attempt of the Engliſh cruiſers to ſearch or interrupt the veſſels under his protection. He encountered ſome Britiſh ſhips of war at the entrance of the Channel, who *proceeded to exerciſe the law of nations* in the uſual manner: the Dane reſiſted, according to his orders; the Engliſh employed force, and brought him with his convoy into port.

In the year 1798, a ſimilar occurrence had taken place: a Swediſh veſſel eſcorting a fleet of merchantmen,

merchantmen, refuſed to permit ſome Britiſh frigates under Commodore Lawford to ſearch them: and a demonſtration was made of repelling the attempt by force. The law and practice of nations has attached the penalty of confiſcation to reſiſtance of *viſitation*. The ſtatutes of France are explicit on this head: the ordinance of 1681, above referred to, expreſſly declares, art. 12, "*That every veſſel ſhall be good prize in caſe of reſiſtance and combat.*"

The Swediſh frigate, with her convoy, being brought into Margate Roads, the veſſels and cargoes were proceeded againſt according to public law and ordinary practice.

The caſe, however, was not a common one. It was remonſtrated on the part of Sweden, that the preſence of a commiſſioned ſhip was a ſufficient ſecurity for the conduct of its convoy, and the legality of their proceedings; that the direct interpoſition of the ſovereign authority of a neutral power, precluded the right and propriety of ſearch by a belligerent. Theſe pretenſions, how-

ever, were not ſupported by the law of nations; and the preſent inſtance was no proof of its ſeverity in that reſpect; for the veſſels thus eſcorted, were many of them laden with naval ſtores and other contraband articles for the ports of our enemies.

There is no reaſon, however, to believe that the Britiſh government would not have aſſented to any equitable regulations by which the law might have been modified with regard to the preſence of commiſſioned ſhips, had it been properly propoſed: but its mere expediency to ſome nations was not ſufficient to juſtify the introducing it by force.

The convention concluded at St. Peterſburgh in June laſt, is a ſufficient proof of the readineſs of the Engliſh government to adopt the ſyſtem moſt agreeable to the wiſhes and convenience of other powers, provided it interferes not with its own intereſts. At that time, however, it could only be guided by the then eſtabliſhed law, and general practice of nations; and

and ſurely no power on earth could undertake, with any hope of ſucceſs, to beat or bully Great Britain out of her rights. The Swediſh merchantmen were condemned by the Court of Admiralty, ſhip and cargo, for reſiſtance of inquiry and ſearch.

The right of ſearching veſſels under convoy of a commiſſioned ſhip, was therefore the moſt convenient to object to at a time when Ruſſia was reſolved to *make* a reaſon for eſtabliſhing a hoſtile convention againſt England. It was a ſubject which had long lain dormant*, becauſe neutral ſtates had not been in the habit of ſending armed veſſels to eſcort their merchantmen; and it was not ſpecifically mentioned in the treaty concluded between the two powers in 1797, in which the *right of ſearch* is fully agreed upon by both parties.

* The right of reſiſting ſearch by the protection of convoy, was firſt ſet up by the Queen of Sweden in 1653, and afterwards much inſiſted on by Holland in 1655, 1656, and 1657; but theſe dates carry us far beyond the period within which Mr. Hauterive has fixed the origin of the preſent maritime code.

The ground of oppoſition to it was the more ſpecious too, as it appeared to involve the honour and dignity of the complaining ſtates, who inſiſted upon the reſpect due to their ſovereign authority, and profeſſed to be alarmed by a violation of it. No extraordinary pains were neceſſary to reconcile the body of the people in the North, to any meaſures hoſtile to Great Britain; envy and jealouſy, and diſappointed avarice, had embittered the trading part of them, whoſe unjuſt and illiberal complaints were made the groundwork of a ſyſtem for exciting the general hatred againſt this country, by diſſeminating the moſt unfounded ideas of the nature and conſequence of its commercial and maritime ſuperiority. To propagate and enforce theſe notions, and to foment theſe popular prejudices; to deſcribe the proſperity of England, as in contradiction to the intereſt of all Europe; theſe are the objects upon which Mr. Hauterive has beſtowed the moſt of his labour and ingenuity. The time, the ſpirit, and the matter of his work, ſhew clearly that his grand object was to promote the diſcontent, and encourage the

the ſpirit of hoſtility againſt England. And ſince we are aſſured that his book met conſiderable ſucceſs where its effect was intended to be produced, we may regard it as a part not altogether inſignificant of the northern conſpiracy.

The miniſtry of England, in the mean time, were not uninformed of what was going on, and reſolved to uſe every endeavour to avert the ſtorm in ſuch a period of extraordinary difficulty. Upon intelligence of the capture of the Daniſh frigate (whoſe buſineſs and deſtination were too obvious to be miſtaken), directions were ſent to Lord Whitworth to repair to Copenhagen to arrange an immediate agreement concerning that affair, in order to prevent all unpleaſant conſequences; reſerving the general queſtion for future diſcuſſion. According to the ſtipulations of this agreement, the Daniſh frigate with her convoy, were immediately reſtored; while, on the other hand, Denmark engaged to ſuſpend her convoys till a definitive arrangement of the point in queſtion. This

convention was concluded on the 29th Auguſt 1800.

In the mean time (on the 16th Auguſt) appeared the declaration of the Emperor of Ruſſia, accompanied by the embargo upon the veſſels of the Engliſh in all his ports.

This declaration was the groundwork of the ſubſequent convention, to which it invited the neutral powers; calling upon them to renew the confederacy which they had formed in the year 1780, for the maintenance of the *ſacred principles of a wiſe and impartial neutrality*. To ſee the manifeſto in its true light, it is only neceſſary to conſider the proceedings with which it was coupled. The true character of the armed neutrality is diſplayed by the temper and occaſion that created it: produced at the ſame birth with a monſtrous violation of juſtice, and equity, and ſolemn obligations, and recent treaties* with this country, there could be no doubt concerning

* "At the commencement of the preſent war, the court of Peterſburgh, which had taken the principal part in the

concerning its merits or intent. The ſeveral parties who acceded to it, muſt have felt that they were pledging themſelves to an act of direct hoſtility to England; and engaging in a conſpiracy againſt the private intereſts of one nation, whoſe welfare ſtood connected with the public law of Europe. The convention was firſt concluded between Sweden and Ruſſia, and afterwards acceded to by Denmark, in direct violation of the recent engagements into which ſhe had entered under the convention with Lord Whitworth.

But the character of this alliance is beſt elucidated by the palpable contradiction between the conduct and profeſſions of its authors. It was ſaid to have no other views than the maintenance of certain juſt rights, the introduc-

the formation of the former league, entered with his Majeſty into engagements not only inconſiſtent with the convention of 1780, but of a directly oppoſite nature; engagements which are ſtill in force, and the execution of which his Majeſty is at this moment entitled to claim on every principle of good faith."—Lord Grenville's Note to the Daniſh and Swediſh Miniſters, 15th Jan. 1801.

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tion of certain equitable principles, and the abolition of ſome oppreſſive practices in maritime affairs. How ſhould ſuch objects have been purſued, to be compatible with the peace and tranquillity of Europe, and conſiſtent with the pacific and upright intentions profeſſed by the parties to this league? Should not the propoſed innovations have been candidly ſubmitted, in the way of negotiation, to every power with whoſe intereſts they could interfere? Should not ſome attempt have been made to convince the world of their expediency, and to obtain the peaceable conſent of all the nations concerned in them? Can there in juſtice be any reaſon for proceeding to hoſtilities againſt one nation for practices authorized and enjoined by the ancient laws of Europe, becauſe a few powers have reſolved to promulgate new ones? Could certain ſtates, becauſe they agreed, under exiſting circumſtances, to ſurrender certain rights (while they had no opportunity for exerciſing them), be juſtified in taking arms to compel the ſurrender of them by another power? Or, ſuppoſing that ſuch ſurrender were expedient for the welfare

of

of Europe, how could it be conſiſtent with equity to commence a moſt violent attack upon that power before even its conſent had been ſought for, or its inclination conſulted? No; the armed neutrality, though even its profeſſions were unjuſtifiable, was nothing of what it profeſſed to be: it was an offenſive alliance againſt England. Not only no attempt was made on the part of the allies to negotiate the points to be eſtabliſhed, but the moſt poſitive reſolution was evinced to avoid all diſcuſſion of their merits. The Engliſh miniſtry omitted no efforts to bring the matter into a channel of pacific determination. Ere the Britiſh thunder was heard to roll, the olive-branch had been repeatedly proffered to thoſe with whom we had yet any means of communication left.

The moderation of Great Britain continued to be manifeſted, even when ſhe was driven to the laſt extremity by the inſatuated policy of the northern courts. Although a fleet, equal to the moſt vigorous and deciſive operations, had been equipped with a promptitude and expedition which

which ſurpriſed even thoſe who were beſt acquainted with the naval reſources of the country, a laſt effort for peace was made by an attempt to come to an amicable explanation with the only power among the confederates with whom the ordinary channels of diplomatic intercourſe were ſtill open; the Britiſh miniſters having been forced with inſult from Peterſburgh, and obliged to quit the courtof Sweden. A gentleman, recently appointed to a ſituation of great confidence, was joined in this important and delicate miſſion with the reſident miniſter at Copenhagen. On his arrival at that city, the Britiſh miniſters found all means of conciliation barred by a poſitive refuſal on the part of the Daniſh government to receive their credentials, except on conditions by which the objects in diſpute would have been virtually conceded. Even under theſe circumſtances, which left them no option conſiſtent with the honour of their country, but that of putting an immediate end to their miſſion, one more opportunity was accidentally offered of ſhewing with how much reluctance the Britiſh government

aſſerted

aſſerted their rights by force of arms. Before the miniſters found an opportunity of leaving Copenhagen, an officer arrived with diſpatches from Sir Hyde Parker, announcing the arrival of his fleet off the entrance of the Sound. In this awful moment of criſis they once more tendered their credentials for acceptance, which were again refuſed with circumſtances of arrogance, petulance, and precipitation, which ſhewed the blind obedience of the Daniſh government at that time, to a power whoſe favourite policy was to excite an irreconcilable enmity between Great Britain and the maritime powers of the North. I need not detail the glorious events by which this policy was completely fruſtrated. The rights which Britiſh valour defended, have been aſcertained and ſecured by Britiſh wiſdom and moderation. The ſame terms were accepted in the hour of victory, which were claimed in the moment of an impending conflict with the united maritime force of Europe, and a league which was expreſsly formed for the purpoſe of dictating, under the influence of France, a new code of maritime

law

law to the world, has ended in the general acknowledgment and final recognition of the old, under the auſpices of Great Britain.

In the mean time our enemies were flattered with the proſpect of an approximation to that happy ſtate of things, that beautiful ſyſtem of commercial peace, which Hauterive deſcribes in ſuch glowing colours: to that emancipation of Europe, that delivery from her political thraldom, by the annihilation of Britain, the never-varying object of the benevolence, impartiality, and wiſdom of the rulers of the Great Nation. Alas! that France ſhould have been only a ſpectator in the accompliſhment of this ſublime revolution; that the world ſhould be indebted to the *Barbares du Nord,* for the ineſtimable benefit of England's degradation; and that the liberty of the ſeas ſhould have been aſſerted by the paſſion or caprice of an eccentric deſpot! France may, however, with juſtice, claim the merit of a very active, though not the moſt ſtriking part of this extraordinary drama. She never will be reproached with having omitted

any ſpecies of intrigue, any ſecret practices, any propagation of falſehood, any incendiary publications, any groſs adulation, by which the weakneſs of princes, and the ignorance or paſſion of their ſubjects, could be turned to advantage; by which the powers of the North could be provoked to raiſe the fabric which ſhould eclipſe the glory, and darken the proſpects of Great Britain. I think an attentive and impartial peruſal of the following work will clearly ſhew, that a conſpiracy againſt the deareſt intereſts of England, muſt always prove a conſpiracy againſt the intereſts of all Europe. Happily for us, and for the world, the ſucceſs of theſe plans was only momentary. France did not long enjoy the ſpectacle of Britain's difficulties. She beheld her undaunted courage, her vigorous efforts, with diſmay, and at length ſaw all her hopes blaſted by the good policy and moderation which ſeized the firſt opportunity of reſtoring peace and juſtice, and in the midſt of victory ſubſtituted a truly equitable treaty to the hoſtile convention, miſnamed the armed neutrality.

Of this ſyſtem, the foundation and ſupport was finally proved to the world by the occaſion and manner of its diſſolution, and Europe beheld how little it had to do with thoſe immutable principles of juſtice, thoſe extenſive views of humanity, that liberal and enlightened policy which are ſet forth by Hauterive, with all his eloquence, as the true grounds on which the powers of the North are bound to conſpire againſt Great Britain, and to further the views and intereſts of France. It was grafted on the capricious reſentment of a prince, whoſe conduct has warranted ſuſpicions of derangement, and whoſe politics were at once the terror and laughter of Europe. With his life it ended: his ſucceſſor, convinced of the impolicy, as well as injuſtice of his proceedings towards this country, commenced his reign by undoing the extravagancies of his predeceſſor. Superior to the intrigues of France, he was inſenſible to the immenſe advantages of diſtreſſing, or, perhaps, humbling England. He ſoon made known his inclination to renounce the idle pretenſions of the northern league, and to form with England ſuch a convention as might

might ſecure the juſt rights of the belligerent and neutral powers, according to the ſpirit of the ancient law of nations; and at the ſame time define thoſe points on which its ſtipulations were not ſufficiently explicit, or of which the general welfare of Europe did perhaps require ſome modification.

This convention of the 17th June 1801*, is certainly among the moſt important in the annals of hiſtory. It has not only put an end to the dangers that threatened the ſafety of England, and the tranquillity of Europe, at the preſent moment; but it has, in all human probability, precluded the recurrence of thoſe dangers by its wiſe and liberal ſtipulations, equally juſt and ſatisfactory to all the parties concerned in it. It ſeems to have left no dubious point in maritime law which might ſerve as a pretext for any future quarrel with Great Britain, as a handle for any future intrigues of France. The powers of the North ſtand pledged to ſupport the ſyſtem they were lately engaged to oppoſe; and the equitable conceſſions we have conſented to make, have added double

* Vide Appendix, No. I.

ſtrength

ſtrength to the rights we were bound to inſiſt upon. We have lately received the concluding piece of this important treaty; the acceſſion of Sweden* has been notified by our miniſter at St. Peterſburgh, together with the ſolemn aſſurance, that the northern powers have renounced not only the ſpecific alliance which occaſioned their rupture with us, but the principle upon which it was founded, and the pretenſions it was intended to ſupport.

Such has been the concluſion of a conteſt in which our beſt intereſts were involved. The ancient maritime law of Europe has been ſucceſſfully maintained, in an age too favourable to revolutions, and againſt a moſt formidable attempt to ſubvert it. The right of belligerent towards neutral powers, has been conſecrated by a ſolemn treaty with all the ſtates whoſe intereſts and ſituation might incline them to diſpute thoſe rights. It muſt further be obſerved, that there was nothing compulſatory in this convention; it was not the effect of neceſſity on either ſide. The arms of Great Britain had not yet encoun-

* Vide Appendix, No. II.

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tered thoſe of the firſt and principal contracting party; and the peace concluded was not in conſequence of the fortune of war. This circumſtance affords a ſufficient anſwer to what Hauterive ſays when ſpeaking of the law of nations now confirmed: "That it is a code only maintained by the activity and perſeverance of one nation, and the paſſiveneſs of all the reſt."

It is evident, indeed, that, as the object of this part of his work has been completely fruſtrated by the above treaty; ſo the arguments and aſſertions it contains, are completely refuted, if they need any refutation; at leaſt it has involved the matter in the following dilemma: either his reaſoning is inaccurate, and his concluſion falſe; or the ſtates of Ruſſia, Sweden, and Denmark, are governed by wicked or incapable miniſters. He has entered at great length into the merits of the maritime law as it now ſtands, in order to prove that it is a "code of oppreſſion and barbariſm," ſupporting and ſupported by the tyranny of England, to the miſery and ruin of the reſt of Europe. Ruſſia, Sweden, and Denmark, have conſe-

crated this code of oppreſſion, this monument of barbariſm, though he had promiſed them, " that France would willingly join all her ſtrength with that of the powers diſpoſed to arm for the purpoſe of baniſhing this monument of ignorance and barbariſm for ever from the legiſlation of an enlightened age." Europe muſt decide between Hauterive and them.

From theſe obſervations I think we may draw the following concluſions:

That until the year 1780, France and England aſſerted the ſame principles in the practice of maritime warfare; and that if in their conduct towards neutrals there was any difference, the greater ſeverity was on the ſide of France.

That at that period, England being engaged in a conteſt which threatened to exceed her ſtrength, the powers of the North proclaimed their determination to reſiſt a practice that debarred them from conſiderable ſources of gain; and France, eager to ſeize an opportunity to injure

jure her enemy and rival, and check the growing ſuperiority of the Britiſh navy, immediately concurred in that enterpriſe to overturn the law of nations; making a merit of renouncing rights which were no longer ſo uſeful to her, as the renunciation; loudly contraſting her compliance with the tenacity of Great Britain, and even affecting to be the firſt mover and prime ſupporter of this new ſyſtem, from motives of the ſtricteſt juſtice and moſt extenſive benevolence.

That during the late war it became ſtill more the intereſt of France to revive the principles of the armed neutrality, becauſe her own navy was reduced to inſignificance, and her commercial marine nearly annihilated. Accordingly, the hiſtory of her tranſactions with the neutral powers, is one continued ſeries of varied attempts to excite a maritime coalition under that pretence, againſt England. The *liberty of the ſeas* was the ſpecious cry at home and abroad; while her practice, as far as her reduced means would reach, was a conſtant tranſgreſſion, not only of ſuch

profeſſions, but even of the ancient law of nations which they were deſigned to ſupplant.

That her efforts in and out of Europe proved unſucceſsful, till ſome circumſtances of a different nature had diſpoſed a great potentate of the North to ſecond her plans of hoſtility to England; that her labours redoubled with this dawn of hope; and that the official publication written at this period by Mr. Hauterive, was a part of them.

That this publication, addreſſed not to France, but to Europe, was an attempt to inflame the minds of all nations and all princes, and to excite a general coalition againſt this country. In a chapter (a very principal part of the work) appropriated to the rights and relations of neutral powers, it is endeavoured ſo to blend and confound the *commercial proſperity* and *maritime practice* of this country, as to render both equally odious, wherever jealouſy or avarice has created an averſion to either; and thus to procure the co-operation of all Europe in a plan, not merely

merely to deprive us of the right of ſearching neutral traders, and capturing enemies property in time of war, but to ruin the very foundation of our happineſs, to attack all the ſources of our induſtry, to aim at the annihilation of our commerce, and finally to ſeek the deſtruction of Great Britain, as of a monſter devouring the ſubſtance, and trampling on the independence of Europe.

That the aſſertions in this part of the work are generally falſe, and the arguments, for the moſt part, fallacious; ſo that a very ſlight knowledge of hiſtory is ſufficient to refute many of its leading points. Theſe aſſertions and arguments were, however, intended to ſupport the principles, and diſplay the views of the men now at the head of affairs in France; and we muſt not ſuppoſe that they have renounced them becauſe the ſudden death of the Emperor Paul, and the good ſenſe of his ſucceſſor, defeated their plans. England will ever be the object of ſuch plans, while ſhe continues to be the ſtay and bulwark of Europe, againſt a power whoſe ambition knows

no bounds, and whoſe thirſt of aggrandizement muſt be aſſuaged by continual acquiſitions, even in the midſt of peace.

Finally, that the tremendous ſtorm which threatened us from the North, having been partly diſpelled by the above unexpected circumſtance, highly favourable to Great Britain, has been entirely broken and averted by the vigour and promptitude of our arms, and the moderation and wiſdom of our councils. That the treaty of the 17th June does great credit to the miniſtry by whom it was concluded; and that we may reſt aſſured, that, under their guidance, the honour of our country will be effectually aſſerted, and its intereſts vigilantly guarded. We may confidently hope that the plans announced by Hauterive for ruining this country, will prove abortive, from the want of co-operation on the part of thoſe powers, without which they cannot be carried into effect; and that the nations of Europe will long continue in that ſtate of inſenſibility and indolence (that is, of prudence and integrity) of which they are accuſed in this publication, where

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it is ſaid that they have "*ni le diſcernement neceſſaire pour ſentir tout le prix de la liberté, ni aſſez de reſolution pour ſecondre les efforts de leurs liberateurs:*" which is in Engliſh, "that all the remonſtrances, threats, and ſolicitations of France, are unable to provoke them to enter into a conſpiracy to annihilate this country, and enſlave themſelves *."

There

* The plan which Hauterive propoſes to Europe, in the name of the French government, is contained in the following article:

1ſt. Privateering is to be aboliſhed; and all the rights of ſovereignty are to accompany the flag of neutral powers in time of war.

2d. In peace, the commercial intercourſe of nations is to be exempted from every kind of prohibition; except with reſpect to the trade between the different ports of the ſame country, and the navigation between the colonies and mother-country.

In order to compel England to ſubmit to theſe regulations, he propoſes, with regard to the firſt, that the powers of Europe ſhould join with France to aſſert it, *à main armée*; and that, to enforce the ſecond, they ſhould agree to form one *general Navigation Act*, or a ſyſtem of prohibitive laws ſimilar to the Navigation Act of Great Britain; differing from it, however, in this important reſpect, that its operation ſhould not affect all nations alike, but that it ſhould be excluſively directed againſt *England*, who is thus, by general conſent, to be forcibly ſhut out from all the markets of Europe. To put herſelf at the head of ſuch a league, and to aſſiſt

There is another chapter of Mr. Hauterive's work, which did not come within the ſphere of Mr.

affiſt the ſtates of Europe with her arms, her counſels, and by her example (all which he promiſes in her name), is, as he thinks, the utmoſt that France can do for the happineſs and liberty of Europe. In the preſent ſtate of things, it would be premature to aſſert, that France has actually begun to act upon the latter part of this ſyſtem; and that ſhe is determined to refuſe the admittance of every article of Britiſh induſtry or ſpeculation to her markets. We have been aſſured, from high authority, that ſhe has not evinced any diſinclination to a commercial treaty with this country; and we cannot therefore pronounce with certainty upon her preſent conduct. If, however, it ſhould prove a ſpecimen of her future intentions (though we have lately had reaſon to hope that ſhe may not follow Hauterive's ſyſtem), I cannot think that we have much to apprehend on that account. It is now ten years ſince we have been debarred from all authorized or open intercourſe with France; and amidſt all the dangers and difficulties of a ſtate of warfare, we have done ſo well without her connexion, that our commerce has attained to a pitch of greatneſs unexampled in the hiſtory of nations. Can we then for a moment ſuppoſe that the ſame circumſtances will be more prejudicial to us with all the advantages of peace? Were this ſyſtem to be acted on by France alone (and there is not the ſmalleſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that any other nation would aſſiſt her in it), ſhe would herſelf be the only ſufferer by an attempt to injure us. Her prohibitive ſtatutes will only ſerve to oppreſs her own ſubjects, without preventing the entry of thoſe commodities of which they ſtand in need, many of which they can only get from hence, and none of them ſo cheap elſewhere. For, as Hauterive ſays himſelf, "Les loix prohibitives

Mr. Gentz's obſervations, and on which I muſt be permitted to ſay a very few words: I mean that in which he compares the wealth and reſources of France, with thoſe of England. The theme of his reaſoning is, *that the fabric of England's greatneſs is artificial and precarious*, while the *riches and power of France reſt upon a ſolid and immovable foundation.* The arguments by which this propoſition, with all its conſequences, is attempted to be demonſtrated, form by far the moſt elaborate and ingenious part of his work: he doubtleſs conſidered it the moſt important. It is, however, by no means neceſſary to follow him through the long expoſition of his principle, in order to diſprove the reſult to which it leads. I think we ſhall be juſtified by his own arguments for aſſuming opinions directly oppoſite to his.

prohibitives ſont des impôts dont les étrangers ſont ſeulement chargés de faire l'avance et que les nationaux ſont forcés enſuite de rembourſer à un très-haut intérêt.

" Les lois prohibitives n'atteignent que momentanément le commerce général ; elles retombent et pèſent avec durée ſur le commerce national et ſur la conſommation locale."—Page 194.

It

It is his opinion that the reſearches hitherto made in political economy, are all imperfect, and the concluſions drawn from them erroneous: that no method has been diſcovered of eſtimating the real wealth of nations, and that the only one which would lead to a true reſult, is impracticable in the preſent ſtate of the ſcience: that the volumes which have been written on the finances and reſources of Great Britain, are not even approximations to the truth; that they are the offſpring of party, the labours of men who have framed ingenious hypotheſes to arrive at predetermined concluſions; a labyrinth of figures, tables, and comparative ſtatements, with which the partiſans of England have the aſſurance to affront the moſt incontrovertible principles: "*I firmly believe*," ſays he, "*that Mr. Gentz's book, that the budgets of Mr. Pitt, that the calculations of Meſſ. Roſe, Middleton, Beeke, &c.* leave the whole queſtion concerning the foreign and domeſtic commerce of Great Britain, juſt where they found it."

Having

Having thus diſpoſed of all that ſtood in his way, in a very ſummary manner, he proceeds to eſtabliſh concluſions, directly oppoſite to what we learn from the communications of thoſe gentlemen; directly oppoſite to the moſt authentic documents, and directly oppoſite to the common experience of every man who is capable of any diſcernment or diſcrimination. By the application of certain principles (which he explains at much length, though without any regard to order or conſequence) to the ſocial, economical, and political conſtitution of Great Britain, he proves, as he ſays, that her commerce *muſt* have declined, that her wealth *muſt* have been diminiſhed, and that a large portion of her inhabitants *muſt* have been reduced to miſery and want during the late war: in ſhort, that ſhe has been brought to the brink of ruin, while France remains unſhaken aud entire. He aſſumes that his principle is ſufficient to eſtabliſh the fact, even if there were no other proof of it; but that the proofs are numberleſs, and therefore the fact confirms the principle.

If the refutation of the fact or principle were involved in any difficulty; if it were neceſſary to bring forward many of thoſe "*labyrinths of figures,*" which we call authentic documents; if, in ſhort, he had not furniſhed us himſelf with the means of annihilating the whole fabric of his ingenuity in an inſtant, he would probably have remained unanſwered. Who would have encountered difficulty or trouble in ſuch a cauſe?

Among the truths which are ſtudiouſly intermixed with the ſophiſms in this diſſertation on the decline of England's proſperity and reſources, there is one which Hauterive advances with peculiar emphaſis, and exhibits in more than one place: he cannot therefore refuſe to be judged by it; and we require no more. Theſe are his words: (page 263:) "In the ſocial organization of modern times, the population of a country is the moſt infallible criterion of its proſperity." And again (page 264), "It is a truth beyond diſpute, that a nation cannot be impoveriſhed without being depopulated, nor depopulated without being impoveriſhed. And whenever a ſtate preſerves its

population

population in defiance of cauſes that have tended to diminiſh it, we may reſt aſſured that it has preſerved all the ſources of its real wealth." This is clear and explicit; there is not in the whole of his work a point on which he is more decided. We aſſent, without reſerve, to his poſition, and deſire no better grounds for demonſtrating the falſehood of his aſſertions with reſpect to this country: *fas eſt et ab hoſte doceri.* To the *major* which he has given us, we need only apply the reſult of the late population returns * as a *minor,* and leave to him or any man of common ſenſe to draw the inference.

As for the ineſtimable advantages, the immenſe reſources, the happy conſtitution, and the ſimple organization of *France,* which he contraſts with the artificial ſyſtem and exhauſted ſtate of this country, we are not deſirous of detracting from them. A few years will prove whether he has reaſoned right; and ſhould the reſult exceed his moſt ſanguine expectations, England will never have cauſe to lament or dread

* Vide Appendix, No. III.

the proſperity and ſecurity of her neighbour: we ſtand upon too broad a baſis to envy the happineſs of other nations; the riches of France can never make us poor. We cannot however but obſerve, that, if France be really ſo protected by her ſituation, ſo fertile in her ſoil, ſo rich in the induſtry, and ſo ſecure in the valour of her ſons, Europe has the greater reaſon to complain of her conduct, and to execrate her politics. If rich, why did ſhe go forth to rob and plunder others leſs opulent? If above want of every kind, what tempted her to ſeize upon the property, and trample on the liberties of her neighbours? If her poſition and reſources render her independent of the friendſhip, and impenetrable to the hoſtility of all the world, why do we ſee her unprofitable ambition pulling down all the humbler edifices around, to add unneceſſary buttreſſes to a fabric ſo perfect and ſo ſolid?

In the commencement of the chapter of his work now before us, Mr. Hauterive lays down as a general rule, that "the population, induſtry, riches, and power of a nation, are perpetually

ally acting and re-acting on each other, ſo that the changes in any of theſe elements affect the ſtate of the whole, and that they riſe and fall, increaſe or diminiſh, together.

But it became neceſſary for him to ſhew how England is an exception to this rule, when he had proved (as he aſſumes) that the *commerce*, *induſtry*, and *wealth* of this kingdom, have been reduced to the loweſt ebb; for he does not attempt to depreciate the *public power* of Great Britain. The magnitude of our efforts by ſea and land, the achievements of our fleets and armies in all parts of the world, the energy with which our extenſive dominions were every where maintained, and the aſſiſtance liberally afforded to our leſs fortunate allies: all theſe were proofs of power too evident and too impreſſive to be overturned, like the concluſions of Meſſ. *Pitt*, *Gentz*, *Roſe*, *Middleton*, and *Beeke*, with a ſingle ſtroke of the pen. He was the more willing to allow their whole force, becauſe, in tracing the cauſes of what he calls this apparent inconſiſtency, he

found an opportunity of demonſtrating, that the return of peace would be as fatal to the public power, as the war had been diſaſtrous to the internal ſtrength of Great Britain.

The *power* of England, ſays Hauterive, has been rendered independent of the three other claſſes of ſocial organization; has even acquired new vigour and extent, while *they* were periſhing or falling into decay, from the following reaſons: 1ſt, The wonderful proficiency of the Engliſh miniſter in the ſcience of borrowing. 2d, His dexterity in the art of taxation. 3d, His alliance with the monied men. 4th, A credit artificially ſupported; and 5th (and principally), The ſtate of terror and alarm in which he has kept the nation, by dwelling upon, and magnifying, the dangers of a revolution, whereby the frightened people have been compelled to ſacrifice their lives and fortunes to the chimeras of his exalted imagination.

Theſe

Theſe are, in ſubſtance*, the ſeveral ſources from whence England is ſaid to have been enabled to make thoſe efforts that have aſtoniſhed the world, while they have exhauſted herſelf. But as the chief of theſe were created by, and only available in a period of extraordinary difficulty and alarm; as nothing but the urgency of real or imaginary danger could call forth the immenſe ſupplies which were the lever of this momentary power; ſo the termination of the war, it was ſaid, would cut off theſe reſources, and with the ceſſation of the cauſe there would be an end of the effects: at the peace, the paſſions of men would naturally ſubſide; credit would be placed upon its former footing; capital would follow the ſpirit of adventure into the uſual

* I ſay in ſubſtance, becauſe they are not expreſſed either in theſe words, or in this order. The Author has reaſoned at great length on each of them; but it would far exceed the bounds of a Preface to follow his reaſoning. The public may, however, expect to ſee them more fully and ably diſcuſſed; for I have been informed, ſince theſe ſheets were ſent to the preſs, that Sir Francis d'Ivernois has undertaken the refutation of that part of Mr. Hauterive's work which has not been anſwered by Mr. Gentz.

channels; and the Britiſh government, abandoned by its late ſupports, would be left poor, deſtitute, and impotent.

Once more; had it required many words, or any reſearch, to diſprove ſuch arguments, they would probably have been left for ever unanſwered. But as we have now arrived at the period to which his predictions refer, we may paſs ſentence in a few words upon the principles that gave birth to them.

If Mr. Hauterive be right in his conſtruction of the power of the Engliſh government, the peace muſt have put an end to the greater part of it; ſince the credit of the Britiſh miniſter muſt have expired on the 1ſt of October 1801, with all the cauſes which till then ſupported it. He has explicitly declared, that it never could "ſurvive that day, which would diſpel the *faſcinations produced by the dangers and alarms of the war.* Then the ſyſtem of credit will neceſſarily be altered; the new baſis upon which it will ſeek to eſtabliſh itſelf, will be more conducive to the general

neral welfare, but will ceaſe to ſupport the public treaſury."

Thus peace is the experiment which was to verify or diſprove his hypotheſis; we have now enjoyed that bleſſing nearly eight months, and his whole ſyſtem crumbles into atoms beneath the evidence of experience. If the phenomena which he has endeavoured to explain, have exiſted, and continue to exiſt when the cauſes have long ceaſed to which he refers them, we muſt conclude that he has not known, or has not diſcloſed, the true ſources and foundation of their being.

It is unneceſſary to ſay more on this ſubject; we have brought the queſtion to a point where every man may immediately decide upon it. The Britiſh financial operations of the preſent year muſt be known to a writer accuſtomed to watch the *Engliſh budgets** ſo attentively; and we might therefore fairly leave it to himſelf to pronounce

* Vide Appendix, No. III.

between us. The *public power* of Great Britain is not the artificial machine he has deſcribed; it is ſolid and ſecure beyond that of any nation in the world, *France*, ſurely, not excepted *.

We

* It is ſcarcely credible that Hauterive ſhould have ventured to compare the future proſpects of France with thoſe of England, on the ground of public credit; and that he ſhould have given the preference to the former, becauſe, ſays he, "her national debt is a burden of 3,000,000 ſterling only, and one half of that conſiſts of annuities." He ſhould have added: This is not what ſhe *owes*, but what ſhe has agreed *to pay*; and the violation of public faith, which reduced her *annual charge* to this ſum of 3,000,000 ſterling, added much more to its real weight than it took from its nominal value. It may appear paradoxical to aſſert, that the French national debt, at the higheſt pitch to which it ever attained, would be a more eaſy burden now, if it had been faithfully maintained, than is the comparatively ſmall ſum which remains of it; but every perſon who conſiders the nature of public credit will allow it to be true. It is by the violation of its engagements, by the breach of public faith, that a government contracts the moſt intolerable burdens, and dries up the moſt plentiful reſources; and that of France might ſupport and provide for a debt five times as great as what ſhe now acknowledges, with infinitely greater eaſe, if ſhe had not ſported with the confidence of her creditors. The annual charge of the national debt of Great Britain is about 22,500,000*l.*; and it will not be denied, that ſhe diſcharges this with leſs difficulty and preſſure than the French do their 3,000,000*l.*: but had ſhe only violated her engagements in a ſingle inſtance, had ſhe defrauded

We have thus refuted two poſitions on which our Author values himſelf very much, and to eſtabliſh which, is among the primary objects of his deſign. We have extorted from himſelf the proofs we wanted to ſhew, that the *commerce*, *revenues*, and *population* of England, have not been

defrauded her moſt inſignificant creditor of the moſt trifling claims, ſhe would now, perhaps, be labouring under all the financical diſtreſſes of France.

I cannot help ſubmitting the following ſtatement to my readers: it is an exact account of the liquidation of an acknowledged claim upon the French government:

Suppoſe the claim to be for £50,000 tournois, or French livres, which, according to the *ſcale of depreciation*, may be aſcertained to be worth 9000. Of theſe 9000 livres one third is paid in *rentes proviſoires*, a fund now worth about 48 per cent. and the remaining two thirds is paid in *bons deux tiers*, another fund, worth, according to the laſt quotations, 2½ per cent. or 50 ſols for a hundred livres: the account will then ſtand thus:

3000 livres, at 47½ *a* 48 per cent. -		1440 livres.
6000 ditto, 2½ per cent. - -		150 ditto.
9000		1590 livres.

Theſe *rentes proviſoires* and *bons deux tiers* are to be funded in the *Tiers conſolidés* (a 5 per cent. fund, now worth about 57 per cent) one year after the peace. At this rate, liquidated claims on the French government are worth little more than one ſixth of their nominal value.

The claims of foreigners, of whatever nation, on the Britiſh government, are paid without deduction of a ſingle farthing.

diminiſhed by the war; and that her *public power* has not been created and ſupported by it.

But when we ſay that the war has not produced the effects aſſigned to it by this writer, either one way or the other, we do not wiſh to be ſuppoſed among the number of thoſe who conceive it to have been a ſource of proſperity and gain to this country. Becauſe England has flouriſhed *during* (I ſhould ſay, *notwithſtanding*) the war, the error has ſometimes obtained, that ſhe actually proſpered BY the war: an opinion which has been ſtudiouſly circulated by our enemies in ſupport of their attempts to lay all the miſeries and bloodſhed in Europe to our charge, by perſuading the world that we continued the war for our commercial intereſts. No: while the proofs are numberleſs, that the wealth and commerce of Great Britain have rapidly increaſed even in this period of diſaſtrous hoſtility; the arguments are likewiſe irreſiſtible by which it is maintained that it muſt have tended to diminiſh them. That they have not been diminiſhed, that they have actually increaſed, is, becauſe the principle of their growth has

has proved ſuperior to the cauſes that counteracted it; but thoſe cauſes have nevertheleſs had their effect; and great as we now are, we muſt have been much greater if they had never exiſted.

——Lætis hunc numina rebus,
Creſcendi poſuere modum.

But if any man be diſpoſed to lament this loſs of the opportunity of gain, and to regret the part we have taken in the war; let him for a moment conſider the objects we have ſecured, and the dangers we have avoided. Let him, while the remembrance of what has paſſed is yet freſh in his mind, retrace the laſt ten years of the hiſtories of France and England; let him contraſt the preſent ſituation, and compare the future proſpects of the two countries; and he will hardly fail to ſet a juſt value upon the veſſel which has weathered ſuch a ſtorm, and the wiſdom which has guided the helm. The alarm that has ſo long agitated every member of ſociety, who could or would appreciate the bleſſings of law and order, has now, in part, ſubſided; and we are left at liberty to contemplate the awful effects of the tempeſt we have happily eſcaped. Unwilling to

inſult our neighbours with our pity, we cannot, however, ſuppreſs the ſigh which the ſpectacle of their ruin muſt draw from every philanthropic breaſt, whatever its political affections or opinions. Whoever ſeriouſly conſiders the preſent ſtate of France, the morals, the habits, the ſocial and political exiſtence of her altered ſons,

Præteritique memor flebit, metuenſque futuri.

May the efforts of her preſent government, if its intentions be ſuch as it profeſſes, prove ſucceſsful! may it ſucceed in re-eſtabliſhing all thoſe ſacred inſtitutions which France ſo wantonly ſacrificed; and which we have maintained at the expenſe of ſo much blood and treaſure againſt her attempts to reduce us to the level of her own miſery! All this, however, muſt be the work of ſome time; at preſent we can only wiſh for ſuch improvements. The boaſted regeneration of philoſophic France has produced a civil and political nondeſcript, whoſe infancy has been marked by the extremes of external violence, and internal corruption; and we have yet to learn if its progreſs and maturity will be more compatible

compatible with the ſafety and tranquillity of the world.

I have endeavoured, in the preceding obſervations, to point out the inconſiſtency and abſurdity of ſome of Mr. Hauterive's principal attacks upon this country. I muſt now reſign him to abler hands. Mr. Gentz, in his Defence of Europe, has undertaken a much more elaborate refutation of his doctrines; and I truſt it will be owned that he has eſtabliſhed the reverſe of what is ſet forth in the *Etat de la France*. I need ſay nothing of the abilities of Mr. Gentz: they are well known to the public in this country, by his work on the finances and reſources of Great Britain; a work whoſe intrinſic merit has conferred on its author a very high rank among writers on the ſame ſubject, but which excites our admiration in a ſuperior degree, when we conſider the circumſtances under which it was produced. We are aſtoniſhed that a native of Germany, at a diſtance from all the ſources of information, and unaſſiſted by a ſingle work of any value in his own language, ſhould have collected

ſo much knowledge, and have reaſoned ſo accurately, on the wealth and reſources of this country, as to rival the very beſt productions of our own on a ſubject immediately belonging to ourſelves.

Mr. Gentz has divided the following work into three Parts: the two firſt will be found intereſting to the general politician; the laſt is particularly ſo to the Engliſh reader. The firſt Part treats of the ſtate of Europe before the French revolution; the ſecond deſcribes the effects of that event, and the condition in which the continent has been left by the war to which it gave riſe; and the third is a diſſertation on the preſent relations of France to her friends and enemies. The fourth chapter of this laſt diviſion is an inquiry into the complaints which have been ſo generally and ſo loudly urged on the continent againſt what has been ſtrangely called the "commercial tyranny of the Engliſh." Mr. Gentz has here diſplayed the falſehood of the opinions concerning the nature and origin of our commercial ſuperiority, which have been induſtriouſly circulated by our rivals, and too eaſily adopted by ignorance

ignorance or envy among the nations whom it was intended to excite againſt us. It will not be denied, that a refutation of ſuch opinions is highly important to our intereſts; and it is obvious that the arguments on our ſide muſt in this caſe acquire conſiderable weight from the country and character of the perſon who has undertaken the cauſe of truth and juſtice. It muſt be remembered that it is a *Pruſſian* writer, entirely unconnected with England, and unbiaſſed by national prejudice, or views of party, who vindicates the character of Great Britain, and expoſes the folly of regarding her wealth and power as detrimental to the proſperity, and incompatible with the ſecurity of the reſt of Europe.

With reſpect to the tranſlation itſelf, the deſire of rendering my Author with fidelity muſt be my apology for many of the defects that will be found in it. As ſtrength of argument is more looked for than elegance of ſtyle in a work of this nature, I may entreat pardon for the *Germaniſms* which, I fear, too frequently occur in this Engliſh verſion of Mr. Gentz's work.

London, May 1802.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

CONVENTION between his Britannic Majeſty, and the Emperor of Ruſſia, ſigned at St. Peterſburgh the $\frac{5}{17}$*th June* 1801.

In the Name of the Moſt Holy and undivided Trinity.

THE mutual deſire of his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, being not only to come to an underſtanding between themſelves with reſpect to the differences which have lately interrupted the good underſtanding and friendly relations which ſubſiſted between the two ſtates; but alſo to prevent, by frank and preciſe explanations upon the navigation of their reſpective ſubjects, the renewal of ſimilar altercations and troubles which might be the conſequence of them; and the common object of the ſolicitude of their ſaid Majeſties being to ſettle, as ſoon as can be done, an equitable arrangement of thoſe differences, and an invariable determination of their principles upon the rights of neutrality, in their application to their reſpective monarchies, in order to unite more cloſely the ties of friendſhip and good intercourſe, of which they acknowledge the utility and the benefits; have named and choſen for their

their plenipotentiaries, viz. his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne Lord Baron St. Helens, his ſaid Majeſty's Privy Counſellor, and his Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias; and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, Sieur Nikita Count de Panin, his Privy Counſellor, Miniſter of State for the department of foreign affairs, preſent Chamberlain, Knight Grand Croſs of the orders of St. Alexander Newſky, and of St. Anne of the firſt claſs, of that of St. Ferdinand, and of Merit, of the Red Eagle, and of St. Lazarus; who, after having communicated their reſpective full powers, and found them in good and due form, have agreed upon the following points and articles:

ARTICLE I.

There ſhall be hereafter between his Britannic Majeſty and his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias, their ſubjects, the ſtates and countries under their dominion, good and unalterable friendſhip and underſtanding; and all the political, commercial, and other relations of common utility between the reſpective ſubjects, ſhall ſubſiſt as formerly, without their being diſturbed or troubled in any manner whatever.

ARTICLE II.

His Britannic Majeſty and the Emperor of all the Ruſſias declare, that they will watch over the moſt rigorous execution of the prohibitions againſt the trade of contraband

band of their ſubjects with the enemies of either of the high contracting parties.

ARTICLE III.

His Britannic Majeſty and his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias having reſolved to place under a ſufficient ſafeguard the freedom of commerce and navigation of their ſubjects, in caſe one of them ſhall be at war, whilſt the other ſhall be neuter, have agreed :—

1. That the ſhips of the neutral power may navigate freely to the ports, and upon the coaſts of the nations at war.

2. That the effects embarked on board neutral ſhips ſhall be free, with the exception of contraband of war, and of enemy's property ; and it is agreed not to compriſe under the denomination of the latter, the merchandiſe of the produce, growth, or manufacture of the countries at war, which ſhould have been acquired by the ſubjects of the neutral power, and ſhould be tranſported for their account, which merchandiſe cannot be excepted in any caſe from the freedom granted to the flag of the ſaid power.

3. That in order to avoid all equivocation and miſunderſtanding of what ought to be conſidered as contraband of war, his Britannic Majeſty, and his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias, declare, conformably to the 11th article of the treaty of commerce concluded between the two crowns on the 10th (21ſt)

February 1797, that they acknowledge as ſuch the following articles only; viz.—cannons, mortars, fire-arms, piſtols, bombs, grenades, balls, bullets, firelocks, flints, matches, gunpowder, ſaltpetre, ſulphur, cuiraſſes, pikes, ſwords, ſword-belts, knapſacks, ſaddles and bridles; excepting, however, the quantity of the ſaid articles which may be neceſſary for the defence of the ſhip and of thoſe who compoſe the crew; and all other articles whatever not enumerated here ſhall not be reputed warlike and naval ſtores, nor be ſubject to confiſcation, and of courſe ſhall paſs freely, without being ſubjected to the ſmalleſt difficulty, unleſs they be conſidered enemy's property in the ſenſe above ſpecified. It is alſo agreed, that that which is ſtipulated in the preſent article ſhall not be prejudicial to the particular ſtipulations of one or the other crown with other powers, by which articles of a ſimilar kind ſhould be reſerved, prohibited, or permitted.

4. That in order to determine what characterizes a blockaded port, that denomination is given only to a port where there is, by the diſpoſitions of the power which attacks it with ſhips ſtationary, or ſufficiently near, an evident danger in entering.

5. That the ſhips of the neutral power ſhall not be ſtopped but upon juſt cauſes and evident facts: that they be tried without delay, and that the proceeding be always uniform, prompt, and legal.

In order the better to enſure the reſpect due to theſe ſtipulations, dictated by the ſincere deſire of conciliating every

every intereſt, and to give a new proof of their uprightneſs and love of juſtice, the high contracting parties enter here into the moſt formal engagement to renew the ſevereſt prohibitions to their captains, whether of ſhips of war or merchantmen, to take, keep, or conceal on board their ſhips, any of the articles which, in the terms of the preſent convention, may be reputed contraband, and reſpectively to take care of the execution of the orders which they ſhall have publiſhed in their admiralties, and wherever it ſhall be neceſſary.

ARTICLE IV.

The two high contracting parties, wiſhing alſo to prevent all ſubject of diſſenſion in future by limiting the right of ſearch of merchant ſhips going under convoy to thoſe caſes only, in which the belligerent power might experience a real prejudice by the abuſe of the neutral flag, have agreed,

1. That the right of ſearching merchant ſhips belonging to the ſubjects of one of the contracting powers, and navigated under convoy of a ſhip of war of the ſaid power, ſhall only be exerciſed by ſhips of war of the belligerent party, and ſhall never extend to letters of marque, privateers, or other veſſels, which do not belong to the royal or imperial fleet of their Majeſties, but which their ſubjects ſhall have fitted out for war.

2. That the proprietors of all merchant ſhips belonging to the ſubjects of one of the contracting ſovereigns, which ſhall be deſtined to ſail under convoy of a

ſhip of war, ſhall be required, before they receive their ſailing orders, to produce to the commander of the convoy, their paſſports and certificates, or ſea letters, in the form annexed to the preſent treaty.

3. That when ſuch ſhip of war, having under convoy merchant ſhips, ſhall be met with by a ſhip or ſhips of war of the other contracting party, who ſhall then be in a ſtate of war, in order to avoid all diſorder, they ſhall keep out of cannon ſhot, unleſs the ſtate of the ſea, or the place of meeting, render a nearer approach neceſſary; and the commander of the ſhip of the belligerent power ſhall ſend a boat on board the convoy, where they ſhall proceed reciprocally to the verification of the papers and certificates that are to prove on one part, that the ſhip of war is authorized to take under its eſcort ſuch or ſuch merchant ſhips of its nation, laden with ſuch a cargo, and for ſuch a port: on the other part, that the ſhip of war of the belligerent party belongs to the royal or imperial fleet of their Majeſties.

4. This verification made, no ſearch ſhall take place, if the papers are found in form, and if there exiſts no good motive for ſuſpicion. In the contrary caſe, the commander of the neutral ſhip of war (being duly required thereto by the commander of the ſhip or ſhips of war of the belligerent power) is to bring to and detain his convoy during the time neceſſary for the ſearch of the ſhips which compoſe it, and he ſhall have the faculty of naming and delegating one or more officers to aſſiſt at the ſearch of the ſaid ſhips, which ſhall be done in his preſence on board each merchant ſhip, conjointly with

one

one or more officers appointed by the commander of the ſhip of the belligerent party.

5. If it happen that the commander of the ſhip or ſhips of the power at war, having examined the papers found on board, and having interrogated the maſter and crew of the ſhip, ſhall ſee juſt and ſufficient reaſon to detain the merchant ſhip, in order to proceed to an ulterior ſearch, he ſhall notify ſuch intention to the commander of the convoy, who ſhall have the power to order an officer to remain on board the ſhip thus detained, and to aſſiſt at the examination of the cauſe of her detention. The merchant ſhip ſhall be carried immediately to the neareſt and moſt convenient port belonging to the belligerent power, and the ulterior ſearch ſhall be carried on with all poſſible diligence.

ARTICLE V.

It is in like manner agreed, that if any merchant ſhip thus convoyed ſhould be detained without juſt and ſufficient cauſe, the commander of the ſhip or ſhips of war of the belligerent power ſhall not only be bound to make to the owners of the ſhip and of the cargo, a full and perfect compenſation for all the loſſes, expenſes, damages, and coſts, occaſioned by ſuch a detention, but ſhall moreover undergo an ulterior puniſhment for every act of violence or other fault which he may have committed, according as the nature of the caſe may require. On the other hand, the convoying ſhip ſhall not be permitted, under any pretext whatſoever, to reſiſt by force the detention of the merchant ſhip or ſhips by the ſhip

or ſhips of war of the belligerent power; an obligation which the commander of a ſhip of war with convoy is not bound to obſerve towards letters of marque and privateers.

ARTICLE VI.

The high contracting parties ſhall give preciſe and efficacious orders that the judgments upon prizes made at ſea ſhall be conformable with the rules of the moſt exact juſtice and equity; that they ſhall be given by judges above ſuſpicion, and who ſhall not be intereſted in the affair in queſtion. The government of the reſpective ſtates ſhall take care that the ſaid deciſions ſhall be ſpeedily and duly executed, according to the forms preſcribed. And in caſe of an unfounded detention, or other contravention to the regulations ſtipulated by the preſent article, the owners of ſuch ſhip and cargo ſhall be allowed damages proportioned to the loſs occaſioned thereby. The rules to obſerve for theſe damages, and for the caſe of unfounded detention, as alſo the principles to follow for the purpoſe of accelerating the proceſs, ſhall be the matter of additional articles, which the contracting parties agree to ſettle between them, and which ſhall have the ſame force and validity as if they were inſerted in the preſent act. For this effect, their Britannic and Imperial Majeſties mutually engage to put their hand to the ſalutary work, which may ſerve for the completion of theſe ſtipulations, and to communicate to each other, without delay, the views which may be ſuggeſted to them by their equal ſolicitude, to prevent the leaſt grounds for diſpute in future.

ARTICLE VII.

To obviate all the inconveniencies which may ariſe from the bad faith of thoſe who avail themſelves of the flag of a nation without belonging to it, it is agreed to eſtabliſh for an inviolable rule, that any veſſel whatever, in order to be conſidered as the property of the country, the flag of which it carries, muſt have on board the captain of the ſhip, and one half of the crew of the people of that country, and the papers and paſſports in due and perfect form; but every veſſel which ſhall not obſerve this rule, and which ſhall infringe the ordinances publiſhed on that head, ſhall loſe all rights to the protection of the contracting powers.

ARTICLE VIII.

The principles and meaſures adopted by the preſent act ſhall be alike applicable to all the maritime wars in which one of the two powers may be engaged, whilſt the other remains neutral. Theſe ſtipulations ſhall in conſequence be regarded as permanent, and ſhall ſerve for a conſtant rule to the contracting powers in matters of commerce and navigation.

ARTICLE IX.

His Majeſty the King of Denmark, and his Majeſty the King of Sweden, ſhall be immediately invited by his Imperial Majeſty, in the name of the two contracting parties, to accede to the preſent convention, and at the ſame time to renew and confirm their reſpective treaties of commerce with his Britannic Majeſty; and

his ſaid Majeſty engages, by acts which ſhall have eſtabliſhed that agreement, to render and reſtore to each of theſe powers all the prizes that have been taken from them, as well as the territories and countries under their dominion, which have been conquered by the arms of his Britannic Majeſty ſince the rupture, in the ſtate in which thoſe poſſeſſions were found at the period at which the troops of his Britannic Majeſty entered them. The orders of his ſaid Majeſty for the reſtitution of thoſe prizes and conqueſts ſhall be immediately expedited after the exchange of the ratifications of the acts by which Sweden and Denmark ſhall accede to the preſent treaty.

ARTICLE X.

The preſent convention ſhall be ratified by the two contracting parties, and the ratifications exchanged at St. Peterſburgh in the ſpace of two months at furtheſt, from the day of the ſignature.

In faith of which the reſpective plenipotentiaries have cauſed to be made two copies thereof perfectly ſimilar, ſigned with their hands, and have cauſed the ſeal of their arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Peterſburgh the $\frac{5}{17}$th June, 1801.

(L. S.) St. Helens.
(L. S.) N. Cte. de Panin.

Formula

Formula of the Paſſports and Sea Letters which are to be delivered in the reſpective Admiralties of the States of the two High Contracting Parties, to the Ships and Veſſels which ſhall ſail from them, conformable to Article IV. *of the preſent Treaty.*

Be it known that we have given leave and permiſſion to N——. of the city or place of N——, maſter and conductor of the ſhip N——, belonging to N——, of the port of N——, of —— tons or thereabouts, now lying in the port or harbour of N——, to ſail from thence to N——, laden with N——, on account of N——, after the ſaid ſhip ſhall have been viſited before its departure in the uſual manner by the officers appointed for that purpoſe; and the ſaid N——, or ſuch other as ſhall be veſted with powers to replace him, ſhall be obliged to produce in every port or harbour which he ſhall enter with the ſaid veſſel to the officers of the place, the preſent licenſe, and to carry the flag of N——, during his voyage.

In faith of which, &c.

FIRST SEPARATE ARTICLE.

The pure and magnanimous intentions of his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias having already induced him to reſtore the veſſels and goods of Britiſh ſubjects, which had been ſequeſtered in Ruſſia, his ſaid Majeſty confirms that diſpoſition in its whole extent; and his Britannic Majeſty engages himſelf alſo to give immediate orders for taking off all ſequeſtration laid upon the Ruſſian, Daniſh, and Swediſh properties, detained in Engliſh ports, and to prove ſtill more his ſincere deſire to terminate amicably the differences which have ariſen between

Great Britain and the northern Courts; and in order that no new incident may throw obſtacles in the way of this ſalutary work, his Britannic Majeſty binds himſelf to give orders to the commanders of his forces by land and ſea, that the armiſtice now ſubſiſting with the Courts of Denmark and Sweden ſhall be prolonged for a term of three months from the date of this day; and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, guided by the ſame motives, undertakes, in the name of his allies, to have this armiſtice maintained during the ſaid term.

This ſeparate article ſhall have the ſame force and validity as if it were inſerted word for word in the Treaty ſigned this day; and the ratifications thereof ſhall be exchanged at the ſame time.

In faith of which, the reſpective plenipotentiaries have cauſed to be made two copies thereof perfectly ſimilar, ſigned with their hands, and have cauſed the ſeal of their arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Peterſburgh, $\frac{17}{29}$ June 1801.

(L. S.) St. Helens.
(L. S.) N. Cte. de Panin.

SECOND SEPARATE ARTICLE.

The differences and miſunderſtandings which ſubſiſted between his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, being thus terminated, and the precautions taken by the preſent Convention not giving further room

room to fear that they can in future diſturb the harmony and good underſtanding which the two high contracting parties have at heart to conſolidate, their ſaid Majeſties confirm anew, by the preſent Convention, the treaty of commerce of the 10th February (21) 1797, of which all the ſtipulations are here cited, to be maintained in their whole extent.

This ſeparate article ſhall have the ſame force and validity as if it were inſerted word for word in the Treaty ſigned this day; and the ratifications thereof ſhall be exchanged at the ſame time.

In faith of which the reſpective plenipotentiaries have cauſed to be made two copies thereof perfectly ſimilar, ſigned with their hands, and have cauſed the ſeal of their arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Peterſburgh the $\frac{5}{17}$ June 1801.

(L. S.) St. Helens.
(L. S.) N. Cte. de Panin.

DECLARATION.

Although the magnanimous intention of his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias to do full and entire juſtice to thoſe Britiſh ſubjects who have ſuffered loſſes during the troubles which have diſturbed the good intelligence between his empire and Great Britain, be already proved by facts, his Imperial Majeſty, conſulting ſolely his good faith, has moreover authorized the underſigned plenipotentiary to declare, as he does declare by theſe preſents:

" That

" That all the ſhips, the merchandiſe, and the property of Britiſh ſubjects, which had been ſequeſtrated during the laſt reign in Ruſſia, ſhall not only be faithfully reſtored to the ſaid Britiſh ſubjects, or to their agents, but alſo that for the effects which may have been alienated in ſuch a manner as to render it impoſſible for them to be reſtored in kind, a ſuitable equivalent ſhall be granted to the proprietors, which equivalent ſhall be hereafter determined according to the rules of equity."

In faith of which we, plenipotentiary of his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias, have ſigned the preſent declaration, and have cauſed the ſeal of our arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Peterſburgh, $\frac{5}{17}$ June, 1801.

(L. S.) N. Cte. DE PANIN.

No. II.

ADDITIONAL ARTICLES ſigned at Moſcow the $\frac{29}{8}$*th October* 1801, *to the Convention between his Majeſty and the Emperor of Ruſſia, concluded at St. Peterſburgh the* $\frac{17}{5}$*th June* 1801.

WHEREAS by the VIth article of the Convention concluded the $\frac{17}{5}$th June 1801, between his Britannic Majeſty, and his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias, it was ſtipulated that the two high contracting parties ſhould mutually agree on ſome additional articles, which ſhould

ſhould fix the regulations and principles to be obſerved, as well for accelerating the judicial proceedings upon captures made at ſea, as for the damages which ſhould be allowed to the owners of neutral ſhips and cargoes, in caſes of unfounded detention, their ſaid Majeſties have named and authorized for this purpoſe, viz. his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne Lord Baron St. Helens, a Peer of the ſaid United Kingdom, one of his ſaid Majeſty's moſt honourable Privy Council, and his Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias; and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, the Sieur Alexander Prince de Kourakin, his Vice Chancellor, Actual Privy Counſellor, Miniſter of the Council of State, Actual Chamberlain, Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jeruſalem, and Knight of the Ruſſian Orders of St. Andrew, of St. Alexander Newſky, and of St. Anne of the Firſt Claſs; of thoſe of Pruſſia, of the Black and Red Eagles; of thoſe of Denmark, of the Danebrog, and of the Perfect Union; and Grand Croſs of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerufalem: and the Sieur Victor Count de Kotſchoubey, his Actual Privy Counſellor, Miniſter for the Department for Foreign Affairs, Senator, Actual Chamberlain, and Knight of the Orders of St. Alexander Newſky, of St. Vladimir of the Second Claſs; and Commander of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jeruſalem; who, in virtue of their reſpective full powers, have agreed upon the following articles:

ARTICLE I.

In caſe of unfounded detention, or other contravention of the eſtabliſhed regulations, the owners of the veſſel and cargo

cargo ſo detained ſhall be allowed compenſation for each day's demurrage, proportionate to the loſs they ſhall have ſuſtained, according to the freight of the ſaid ſhip, and the nature of its cargo.

ARTICLE II.

If the miniſters of one of the high contracting parties, or any other perſons accredited by the ſame to the belligerent power, ſhould remonſtrate againſt the ſentence which ſhall have been paſſed by the reſpective courts of admiralty upon the ſaid captures, appeal ſhall be made in Ruſſia, to the Directing Senate, and in Great Britain, to his Majeſty's Privy Council.

ARTICLE III.

Care ſhall be taken on both ſides ſcrupulouſly to examine whether the regulations and precautions agreed upon in the preſent Convention have been obſerved, which ſhall be done with all poſſible diſpatch. The two high contracting parties moreover mutually engage to adopt the moſt efficacious meaſures, in order to prevent the ſentences of their ſeveral tribunals reſpecting captures made at ſea being ſubject to any unneceſſary delay.

ARTICLE IV.

The goods in litigation cannot be ſold or unloaded before final judgment, without an urgent and real neceſſity, which ſhall have been proved before the Court of Admiralty, and by virtue of a commiſſion to this effect; and the captors ſhall by no means be permitted to remove or take away on their own authority, either openly or clandeſtinely, any thing from a veſſel ſo detained.

Theſe additional articles, making part of the convention ſigned the $\frac{17}{5}$th June 1801, in the names of their Britannic and Imperial Majeſties, ſhall have the ſame force and validity as if they were inſerted word for word in the ſaid Convention.

In witneſs whereof, we the underſigned, furniſhed with full powers of their ſaid Majeſties, have ſigned, in their names, the preſent additional articles, and have affixed the ſeal of our arms thereto.

Done at Moſcow, the $\frac{20}{8}$th October 1801.

(L. S.) St. Helens.
(L. S.) Le Prince de Kourakin.
(L. S.) Le Comte de Kotschoubey.

DECLARATION explanatory of the Second Section of the Third Article of the Convention, concluded at Peterſburgh the $\frac{17}{5}$th June 1801, *between his Majeſty and the Emperor of Ruſſia, ſigned at Moſcow the $\frac{20}{8}$th October* 1801.

In order to prevent any doubt or miſunderſtanding with regard to the contents of the ſecond ſection of the third article of the Convention concluded the $\frac{5}{17}$th June 1801, between his Britannic Majeſty, and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, the ſaid high contracting parties have agreed and declare, that the freedom of commerce and navigation granted by the ſaid article

to the ſubjects of a neutral power, does not authorize them to carry, in time of war, the produce or merchandiſe of the colonies of the belligerent power direct to the continental poſſeſſions, nor *vice verſa*, from the mother-country to the enemies' colonies; but that the ſaid ſubjects are however to enjoy the ſame advantages and facilities in this commerce as are enjoyed by the moſt favoured nations, and eſpecially by the United States of America.

In witneſs whereof, we, plenipotentiaries of their ſaid Majeſties, have ſigned the preſent declaration, and have affixed the ſeals of our arms thereto.

At Moſcow, the $\frac{8}{20}$th October 1801.

(L. S.) St. Helens.
(L. S.) Le Prince de Kourakin.
(L. S.) Le Compte de Kotschoubey.

ACT of ACCESSION of his Majeſty the King of Denmark and Norway to the Convention of the $\frac{17}{5}$*th June* 1801, *and Acceptance of his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

In the Name of the Moſt Holy and Undivided Trinity.

His Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, having, in purſuance of their mutual deſire to terminate, in the moſt equitable manner, the differences which had ariſen between them, as well as between Great Britain and the other maritime powers of

of the North, reſpecting the navigation of their reſpective ſubjects, concluded a Convention, ſigned by their plenipotentiaries at St. Peterſburgh, the $\frac{17}{5}$th June of the preſent year: and their common ſolicitude extending itſelf not only to prevent ſimilar altercations in future, and the troubles which might reſult therefrom, by eſtabliſhing and applying the principles and rights of neutrality in the reſpective monarchies, but alſo to render this ſyſtem common and equally advantageous to the maritime powers of the North; it was ſtipulated by the ninth article of the ſaid Convention, that his Daniſh Majeſty ſhould be invited by his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, in the name of the high contracting parties, to accede to the ſaid Convention; and his Majeſty the King of Denmark and Norway, animated with the ſame ſentiments of conciliation and peace, and deſirous of removing every thing which has interrupted, or might hereafter interrupt, the good underſtanding between their Britannic and Daniſh Majeſties, and to re-eſtabliſh fully on its former footing the ancient harmony, and ſtate of things, ſuch as they exiſted by his Daniſh Majeſty's treaties, and conventions with Great Britain, his ſaid Majeſty has not heſitated to liſten to the invitation made to him to accede to the ſaid Convention, ſigned at St. Peterſburgh the $\frac{17}{5}$ June laſt.

To effect this ſalutary purpoſe, and to give to this act of acceſſion, and to the acceptance of his Britannic Majeſty, every poſſible authenticity, and every accuſtomed ſolemnity, their ſaid Majeſties have named for their plenipotentiaries, viz. his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne

Lord Baron St. Helens, a Peer of the ſaid United Kingdom, one of his ſaid Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy Council, and his Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias; and his Majeſty the King of Denmark and Norway, the Sieur Francis Xavier Joſeph, Count de Danneſkiold Löwendal, Count of the Holy Roman Empire, Knight of the Order of St. John of Jeruſalem, Major General in the ſervice of his Daniſh Majeſty, Commander of his Marine Forces, and his Envoy Extraordinary and Miniſter Plenipotentiary to his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias; who, after having reciprocally exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have concluded and agreed, that all the articles of the Convention concluded between his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, the $\frac{17}{5}$th June of the preſent year, as well as the ſeparate articles annexed thereto, and the additional ones concluded the $\frac{29}{9}$th October 1801, by the plenipotentiaries of their ſaid Majeſties, in all the cauſes, conditions, and obligations, are to be conſidered as having been agreed upon, done, and concluded, word for word, by their Britannic and Daniſh Majeſties themſelves, in quality of principal contracting parties, ſave and except the differences which reſult from the nature of the treaties, and engagements antecedently ſubſiſting between England and Denmark, of which the continuance and renewal are ſecured by the aforeſaid Convention; and with the expreſs ſtipulation on the part of the high contracting and acceding parties, that the ſtipulation of the ſecond article of the additional articles, ſigned

at Moſcow the $\frac{2}{8}$th October 1801, by the plenipotentiaries of their Britannic and Imperial Majeſties, which fixes that the adjudication of cauſes in litigation ſhall, in the laſt reſort, be carried by appeal in Ruſſia, before the Directing Senate, and in Great Britain before his Majeſty's Privy Council, is to be underſtood, as with regard to Denmark, that the ſaid adjudications ſhall be there carried by appeal before the Supreme Tribunal of that kingdom.

In order to prevent any inaccuracy, it has been agreed that the ſaid Convention, ſigned the $\frac{17}{5}$th June, the ſeparate articles annexed thereto, and the additional ones concluded the $\frac{2}{8}$th October 1801, ſhould be inſerted here, word for word.

[Fiat inſertio.]

In conſequence of all which, his Majeſty the King of Denmark accedes, by virtue of the preſent act, to the ſaid Convention, and to the ſaid ſeparate and additional articles, ſuch as they are herein-before tranſcribed, without any exception or reſerve, declaring, and promiſing to fulfil all the clauſes, conditions, and obligations thereof, as far as regards himſelf; and his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland accepts the preſent acceſſion of his Daniſh Majeſty, and in like manner promiſes, on his part, to fulfil all the articles, clauſes, and conditions contained in the ſaid Convention, and the ſeparate and additional articles herein-before inſerted, without any exception or reſerve.

The ratifications of the preſent Act of Acceſſion, and Acceptance, ſhall be exchanged in the ſpace of two months, or ſooner if poſſible; and the ſtipulations of the ſaid Convention ſhall, at the ſame time, be carried into execution as ſpeedily as poſſible, regard being had to the full and entire re-eſtabliſhment of the ſtate of things, ſuch as it was before the period of the miſunderſtandings which are now ſo happily terminated.

In witneſs whereof, we the underſigned, by virtue of our full powers, have ſigned the preſent act, and have thereunto affixed the ſeal of our arms.

Done at Moſcow the $\frac{23}{11}$th October 1801.

(L. S.) St. Helens.

(L. S.) F. X. J. Cte. de Danneskiold-Lowendal.

ACT of ACCESSION of his Majeſty the King of Sweden, to the Convention of the $\frac{17}{5}$ *June* 1801, *and Acceptance of his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

In the Name of the Moſt Holy and Undivided Trinity.

His Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majeſty the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, having terminated, by a Convention concluded at St. Peterſburgh the $\frac{17}{5}$ June 1801, the differences which had ariſen between them reſpecting the rights

rights of neutral navigation in time of war, and his Majeſty the King of Sweden, equally induced by the deſire of removing and conciliating the diſſenſions which exiſted on the ſame ſubject between his Britannic Majeſty and himſelf, having conſented, in conſequence of the invitation that has been made to him, to accede to the above-mentioned Convention; their ſaid Majeſties have choſen and named as their plenipotentiaries to this effect, viz.—His Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne Lord Baron St. Helens, Peer of the ſaid United Kingdom, one of his Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy Council, and his Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Miniſter Plenipotentiary to his Majeſty the Emperor of the Ruſſias; and his Majeſty the King of Sweden, the Sieur Baron Louis Bogiſlas Chriſtopher Court de Stedingk, one of the Lords of the Kingdom of Sweden, his Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Imperial Majeſty of all the Ruſſias, Lieutenant General of his Armies, Chamberlain, Knight and Commander of his Orders, Knight of the Ruſſian Order of St. Andrew, Knight Grand Croſs of his Order of the Sword, Knight of thoſe of Ruſſia, of St. Alexander Newſky, and of St. Anne of the Firſt Claſs, and Knight of the French Order of Military Merit; who, after having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have concluded and agreed upon what follows:—

ARTICLE I.

His Majeſty the King of Sweden accedes by the preſent tranſaction with his Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom

Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, to the Convention which was concluded between his ſaid Majeſty and the Emperor of all the Ruſſias, the $\frac{17}{5}$ June 1801, as well as to the firſt ſeparate article annexed thereto, and to the additional ones concluded on the $\frac{29}{9}$ October 1801, promiſing and engaging to obſerve and fulfil all the ſtipulations, clauſes, and articles therein contained, in the ſame manner as if his Majeſty had been a principal contracting party thereto, ſave and except the differences which reſult from the tenour of the treaties and engagements exiſting between England and Sweden, and which are to be renewed and confirmed in virtue of the aforeſaid Convention.

ARTICLE II.

His Majeſty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland acknowledges on his ſide, his Majeſty the King of Sweden as a contracting party in the Convention concluded at Peterſburgh the $\frac{17}{5}$ June 1801, and binds himſelf in the moſt formal manner to obſerve, execute, and fulfil, to their utmoſt extent, in whatever regards his ſaid Majeſty, the ſtipulations, clauſes, and articles of the ſaid Convention, and of the ſaid firſt ſeparate article, and of the additional ones ; ſave and except the differences which reſult from the tenour of the treaties and engagements exiſting between England and Sweden, and which are to be renewed and confirmed in virtue of the aforeſaid Convention.

ARTICLE III.

It is agreed that the adjudication, in the laſt reſort, of cauſes in litigation, which, according to the ſecond article of the aforeſaid additional articles, are to be brought by appeal before his Majeſty's Privy Council in Great Britain, and before the Directing Senate in Ruſſia, ſhall, in Sweden, be brought by appeal before the Supreme Tribunal, in Swediſh Hôgſta Domſtolen.

ARTICLE IV.

In order to prevent any inaccuracy, it has been agreed that the ſaid Convention, as well as the ſaid ſeparate and additional articles, ſhould be inſerted here word for word, and as follows:—

[Fiat inſertio.]

The preſent Act of Acceſſion ſhall be ratified in good and due form, and the ratifications exchanged at London in the ſpace of two months, or ſooner if poſſible, from the day of its ſignature.

In faith of which, we the underſigned, in virtue of our full powers, have ſigned the preſent Act, and have thereunto affixed the ſeal of our arms.

Done at St. Peterſburgh the $\frac{19}{31}$ March 1802.

(L. S.) St. Helens.
(L. S.) Court Stedingk.

No.

No. IV.

LOANS, 1793 *to* 1802 *inclusive.*

	Years.		Sum borrowed.		Rate of Interest.
			£.		£. s. d.
WAR.	1793	—	4,500,000	—	4 3 4
	1794	—	11,000,000	—	4 10 [illegible]
	1795	—	18,000,000	—	4 15 9
	1796	—	18,000,000	—	4 13 2½
	——	(Imperial)	7,500,000	—	4 12 6
	1797	—	18,000,000	—	5 12 6
	——	—	14,500,000	—	6 7 0
	——	(Imperial)	1,620,000	—	6 15 10¾
	1798	—	17,000,000	—	6 4 11
	1799	—	3,000,000	—	5 12 3½
	——	—	15,500,000	—	5 5 0
	1800	—	20,500,000	—	4 12 2¼
	1801	—	28,000,000	—	5 5 5¼
PEACE.	1801	—	8,500,000	—	4 16 9
	1802	—	25,000,000	—	3 18 1¾
	——	—	1,500,000	—	3 16 9

There would be much to obſerve on this account, unparalleled in the hiſtory of nations, if we were ſpeaking of the reſources of Great Britain in general. But our object was only to ſhew that Hauterive has miſtaken the nature of thoſe reſources, ſince he has ſuppoſed that at the peace there would be an end of them; that he is ignorant of the foundation of Public Credit in this country, ſince he has attributed it entirely to the effect of terror and alarm; and that his hopes have been too ſanguine, if he has expected to ſee the ſtrength of Great Britain diminiſhed by a peace with France.

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ON

ON THE

STATE OF EUROPE

BEFORE AND AFTER THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION,

&c. &c.

THE object of the work we are now about to examine, is no other than to ſhow, that *Europe* is in future to be indebted to the beneficial influence of *France* for the maintenance of all peace and ſecurity, and for the preſervation of its ſocial and political conſtitution: that, on account of her ſituation, her relations to other powers, and the principles of her preſent government, *France* can deſire and aim at nothing elſe than the common welfare of all nations, the independence and ſtability of all governments; and that her political and military greatneſs, her natural and acquired riches, her

preſent ſyſtem of adminiſtration, and the advantages of a conſtitution according with the manners and inclinations of her inhabitants, furniſh her abundant means not only to maintain the poſition ſhe now occupies, but to protect and regulate the nations around her; to eſtabliſh and preſerve the equilibrium among them; and, in ſhort, to become and continue the common centre of a ſyſtem compoſed of all the ſtates of Europe.

To arrive at this reſult, the Author leads us gradually through a ſeries of hiſtorical and political reflections, the ſubſtance of which is contained in the following propoſitions; ſome of them actually laid down by himſelf, and the others immediately deducible from his reaſoning.

1ſt, That, at the commencement of the French revolution, there exiſted no effective law of nations, and no good ſyſtem of government; that authority was guided by no eſtabliſhed maxims; and that the true principles of the political and federal conſtitution were neglected or forgotten.

2d, That the war afterwards waged againſt the French revolution, was the neceſſary conſequence of this univerſal internal and external anarchy;

anarchy; it was only the laſt and open effort of that deſtructive malady which had long been preying upon the vitals of every ſtate, and deſtroying the frail fabric which ſupported their connexions with each other.

3d, That the event of this war has reſtored France to the place which ſhe ought always to occupy, not only for the ſake of her *own ſecurity*, but for the *ſecurity of all Europe*.

France is now in a ſituation to give Europe a new federal conſtitution, in which its proper place may be aſſigned and guaranteed to each particular ſtate.

A part of this new and happy ſyſtem has already been carried into execution, and ſhe is prepared to continue and complete it. She is reſolved to treat her allies with impartial benevolence, her enemies with equity and moderation, and the neutral powers with a due reſpect for their rights. She is prepared and determined to ſerve as a bulwark to Europe, againſt that ſingle ſtate, which, animated by private intereſts, is hoſtile throughout to the intereſts of the reſt; which, determined by thoſe intereſts, is the mover of all the diſſenſions and wars of Europe, and which, if it be not at length confined within

narrower limits, will not only continue to diſturb the peace of all other nations, but will ſtifle the induſtry of the reſt of the world, and trample on the liberties of every people.

4th, That the ſtability of the preſent internal conſtitution of France (the neceſſary foundation of its future political influence) reſts upon the moſt extenſive maſs of natural, artificial, commercial, and military reſources, of which any nation can boaſt; upon a ſyſtem of adminiſtration, ſimple, regular, and wiſe; upon a happy equality between the income and expenditure of the ſtate. It reſts, moreover, upon a government exactly adapted to the ſocial and moral condition of the country, perfectly ſuited to the wants and deſires of its inhabitants; and, laſtly, upon the talents and character of thoſe whom this conſtitution has placed at the head of affairs.

Such is the ſpirit, ſuch is the argumentation which pervades the work: every one who has read it with attention, will admit the juſtice of this repreſentation; and the Author himſelf would hardly refuſe to acknowledge it. A full examination of its principles will be naturally divided into four principal parts; the firſt of which will be *an Inquiry into the State of Europe before the War*

War of the Revolution; the ſecond will treat of the *Situation of Europe during and after that War*; the third will conſider the *preſent Relations between France and the other European Powers*; and the fourth will examine *the internal Conſtitution of the French Republic:* taking them all, however, in thoſe points of view in which the Author has conſidered them.

PART I.

Of the political Situation of Europe before and at the breaking out of the French Revolution.

THE queſtion, *Is a ſyſtem of public law neceſſary for Europe*?* (that is, a conſtitution among nations, founded upon treaties, and as much as poſſible defined and fixed by mutual compact,) ſeems, in the preſent ſtate of the ſcience of politics among all civilized nations, to require no further diſcuſſion. The very nature of the ſocial conſtitution; the tendency of the human mind towards law and order, in preference to anarchy and confuſion; the bare idea of independent ſtates bordering on each other, ſufficiently anſwer ſuch a queſtion. I may therefore, without any danger, paſs over what the Author has ſaid upon this ſubject; to all which I ſhall not heſitate to ſubſcribe in common with every civilized being.

The following will therefore be the only queſtions requiring our attention in proceeding to examine the ſyſtem of our Author.

* Vide Note A.

1ſt,

1ſt, How far did the treaty of Weſtphalia eſtabliſh, as he aſſerts, a ſyſtem of public law in Europe?

2d, How far have any ſubſequent events contributed to diſſolve the ſyſtem of public law, founded by the treaty of Weſtphalia; particularly thoſe events in the eighteenth century, to which the Author aſcribes ſuch pernicious effects?

3d, Did there exiſt any ſyſtem of public law in Europe, at the commencement of the French revolution?

CHAP. I.

How far did the Treaty of Weſtphalia eſtabliſh a Syſtem of public Law in Europe?

THE two following conditions are indiſpenſably neceſſary to any treaty intended to be the baſis of an univerſal and perpetual ſyſtem of public law, even were it only to compriſe the nations lying within a certain large circle; ſuch, for example, as the extent of Europe. In the firſt place, it muſt comprehend all the ſtates of this

circle in all their ſeveral relations; and, in the next place, it muſt contain proviſions, whereby all future revolutions in the internal ſituation and external connexions of theſe ſtates ſhould be foreſeen, conſidered, and taken into the account of the whole political ſyſtem.

It is only neceſſary to ſtate theſe two conditions, to point out the impoſſibility of fulfilling them. The difficulty of defining to the ſatisfaction of all, in one and the ſame negotiation, in one and the ſame treaty, the various and intricate relations, wants, and pretenſions of ſo great a number of independent nations as Europe alone contains, is evident; and even though this difficulty ſhould not be conſidered abſolutely inſurmountable, it will hardly be thought extraordinary that no ſerious attempt ſhould yet have been made to overcome it. The treaty of Weſtphalia had only to encounter a part of it; yet, ſeven years were conſumed in negotiation before it was brought about; and the formation and concluſion of this treaty was, and is ſtill, eſteemed a maſter-piece of diplomatic ability.

But even ſuppoſing that all the ſtates of Europe could enter into ſuch a compact, as would ſerve for the baſis of a general federative conſtitution; would aſcertain all their rights, and define

fine all their relations; yet, there would ſtill be wanting the means of enſuring the everlaſting duration of ſuch a compact, or of providing with any degree of certainty for its future exiſtence. The fate of empires is no leſs ſubject to viciſſitude than that of individuals: owing to the inequality of their reſpective progreſs, to the unexpected growth of new branches of induſtry and power, to the perſonal and family connexions, and, ſtill more, to the opinions, the characters, and the paſſions of their rulers, there muſt neceſſarily happen many changes which no human wiſdom can foreſee, much leſs provide againſt. Each of theſe changes occaſions new wants, new plans, and new pretenſions; endangers or deſtroys the former equilibrium; preſents freſh difficulties to the ſtateſman, and renders it neceſſary to reviſe the ſyſtem, and define the reſpective rights anew. Impoſſible as it is for the code of laws of any nation to provide for every poſſible future variation in the character and manners, the civil, moral, and domeſtic condition of its inhabitants; even ſo impoſſible is it to eſtabliſh an eternal ſyſtem of public law, by means of any general treaty, however numerous the objects which it may embrace, with whatever care and ability it may have been combined.

The

The treaty of Weſtphalia could not be expected to perform that which is beyond the reach of any treaty. It was ſo far from juſtifying ſuch expectations, that it did not even fulfil the firſt condition of a compact deſigned to be the baſis of a federative ſyſtem; it did not include all the nations even then important; and ſtill leſs did it embrace all the relations of the ſtates which it did include. Indeed it was hardly poſſible that it ſhould; for at the time when this peace was negotiated, the ſcience of politics was a perfect ſtranger to the greater part of thoſe important problems which preſented themſelves for ſolution in the following century; it was not then ſuſpected how fruitful a principle of ſocial improvement lay concealed in the darkneſs and confuſion of thoſe times; and the meritorious ſtateſmen who immortalized their names by this treaty, having only the experience of the age in which they lived, contemplated the ſituation and wants of Europe in a comparatively confined and imperfect point of view. It did not even come within their intention, much leſs was it the object of their pride, to lay a ſolid foundation for the public law of Europe.

There can be no doubt but that the treaty of Weſtphalia has been miſconceived, as often as it has been conſidered in this light. The peculiar merit

merit of this famous treaty, is, in fact, entirely confined to *Germany*. It was by fixing the uncertain relations between the Emperor and the ſtates of the Empire; by determining the extent and limits of the ſovereign authority of the German princes; by defining more accurately the competency of the tribunals of the Empire; and, above all, by deciding, in a manner equally juſt and wiſe, the moſt important queſtion at that period—the differences between the two religious parties, and aſſuring to each its rights, its freedom, its poſſeſſions, and its due ſhare in the conſtitution of the Empire, that this treaty became a beneficial and fundamental law for *Germany*; and ſuch it has remained, notwithſtanding the viciſſitude of events, even until the moment when, according to the aſſertions of modern politicians, "*there no longer exiſted any fundamental law or law of nations.*"

But if we proceed to conſider the treaty of Weſtphalia as the baſis of a federal ſyſtem of Europe, it will come before us in a far leſs perfect, and, to ſay the truth, in a very imperfect ſhape. Of the nations at that time the moſt powerful, there were only three, viz. France, Auſtria, and Sweden, which took an immediate part in that treaty. Spain refuſed to accede to it. England was not even taken into conſideration:

neither Denmark, nor Poland, nor the ſtates of Lower Italy, had any direct ſhare in it. Some of the moſt important ſtipulations of this treaty, the independence of Switzerland, and that of the United Provinces, were, in fact, mere formalities, ſince the fate of the nations to which they related, had long before that period been completely decided. Others, ſuch as the ceſſion of ſome maritime diſtricts to Sweden, had very little influence on the great political ſyſtem, or on the events of later times. In various treaties leſs celebrated than that of Weſtphalia, more conſiderable changes of territory and dominion, more important revolutions in the general ſtate of politics, have been either effected or ſanctioned.

Of all the articles of this treaty, the moſt important with reſpect to the general law of nations, was undoubtedly that which determined the indemnification of France; and if this article has ceaſed to be a fundamental law, it has certainly not been the fault of the Germans. Upon the whole, it ſtill remained entire at the breaking out of the French revolution: but, alas! France had in the mean time given more than one melancholy example of a truth, long ſince well known to every ſtateſman,—that the moſt ſolemn treaties are weak and ineffectual barriers to the paſſions of princes and their miniſters.

niſters. Twenty years had ſcarcely elapſed after the treaty of Weſtphalia, when a new war was kindled by the ambition of Lewis XIV. which occupied nearly the whole theatre of the thirty years war; and the *grand fundamental law of* 1648, was inſufficient to prevent a ſeries of violence and bloodſhed, which almoſt every ten years called for new negotiations, and new treaties; while, to preſerve entire even a fragment of the treaty of Weſtphalia, it became neceſſary to ſupport the ſinking balance of Europe, by the treaties of Nimeguen, of Ryſſwick, and of Raſtadt: and it was *France*, and *France only*, whoſe conduct occaſioned the neceſſity of ſuch ſupports! It was *France alone* that offered the firſt violation to this ſacred principle of the federal conſtitution of Europe!

Whoever then expected that the treaty of Weſtphalia would be the foundation of an univerſal political ſyſtem to laſt for ever, muſt have expected more from it than any treaty ever could fulfil. It has effected all that it could or was intended to perform: and, what is more, its fundamental principles have endured longer, and with leſs alteration, than has, perhaps, been the caſe with reſpect to any other treaty. Among its fundamental principles, however, I only reckon thoſe which immediately refer to the *conſtitution*

ſtitution of the German Empire, and thoſe which regard the relations between *France* and *Germany*. Before we can determine what ſubſequent events have overturned or materially endangered the treaty of Weſtphalia, we muſt proceed to examine how far either of theſe fundamental articles have been affected by them.

CHAP. II.

How far has the Treaty of Weſtphalia been ſubverted by ſubſequent Events?

AFTER having decided in the foregoing chapter, in what ſenſe the treaty of Weſtphalia could be called the foundation of a federal conſtitution, and pointed out what was properly *fundamental* in that celebrated compact; we now come to inquire, how far the changes which have ſince happened in Europe, have tended to weaken or deſtroy it, and particularly thoſe three events to which the Author principally aſcribes ſuch effects.—Theſe are, 1ſt, The formation (as the Author calls it) of a new empire in the north of Europe; or, more properly, *the intervention of this northern empire in the intercourſe and relations of the reſt*; 2d, *The elevation of Pruſſia to a power*

of

of the higheſt rank; 3d, *The riſe and progreſs of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem.*

The civilization of Ruſſia, and the intervention of this powerful empire in the federative connexions of Europe, could not but produce very great and important effects on the whole political ſyſtem. Theſe effects, like moſt of the changes which happen on the great theatre of the world, have been in ſome reſpects beneficial, in others pernicious.

The progreſs of civilization among nations before immerſed in barbariſm, is obviouſly a very important advantage, not only to thoſe whom it immediately affects, but to the general maſs of civilized mankind. It multiplies the points of contact among men; it enlarges the ſphere of their connexions, their activity, and their knowledge; opens a new field to induſtry and commerce, and creates additional opportunities of communicating ideas. Taken in this point of view, the advantages are incalculable which have ariſen to Europe from the *civilization of the Ruſſian empire*; which is, perhaps, the greateſt event after the diſcovery of America, in the hiſtory of modern times. This empire has eſtabliſhed a new connexion between the moſt civilized, and ſome of the moſt uncultivated, though in themſelves the richeſt and moſt

moſt fertile parts of the world. The way has been opened by Ruſſia, which will in future lead Europeans into the interior of Aſia; and we have now the pleaſing proſpect of one day ſeeing thoſe happy regions (the cradle of all civilization, perhaps in every ſenſe of the word, the cradle of the human race) returning to a participation of all thoſe truly valuable bleſſings which have ſo long been withheld from them. Laſtly, the Ruſſian empire has for ever removed and placed in the remoteſt degree of poſſibility, the danger of a future irruption of the barbarous nations into Europe; which, not very long ago, was a ſubject of apprehenſion to many an enlightened friend of humanity.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied, that the formation of this new empire has ſerved to render the political relations of ſtates more intricate, and their combinations more difficult; to multiply plans and counter plans, pretenſions and oppoſitions; wars offenſive and defenſive; and to give a new impulſe to that reſtleſs activity which ſo particularly diſtinguiſhes the preſent times. The deſire of the Ruſſian princes to obtain an immediate influence in the federal arrangement of Europe, incited them to many bold meaſures, which filled their neighbours with anxiety and conſternation; alarmed the more

powerful

powerful for the balance of Europe, and made the weaker nations tremble for their very exiſtence. The plans of conqueſt and partition, of which a great part muſt be laid to the account of this empire, were leſs hurtful in their immediate, than in their remote conſequences. They attacked the foundations of all political and ſocial ſecurity; they looſened and invalidated all principles; they made it doubtful whether the law of nations was not an empty name, invented as a cloak for power, and ſecretly deſpiſed by the powerful: they were the model, the pretence, and the excuſe for all future uſurpations; and ſo much did they corrupt the public opinion, that the terms, *ſound policy*, *ſyſtem of equilibrium*, *maintenance or reſtoration of the balance of power*, were too often applied, to what, in fact, was only an abuſe of power, or the exerciſe of arbitrary will.

But none of the changes produced by Ruſſia in the political relations of Europe, were within the ſphere of the ſyſtem founded and eſtabliſhed by the treaty of Weſtphalia. They related almoſt excluſively to the northern ſtates, and to the fate of Poland and Turkey. The two great fundamental articles of that treaty, the *internal political organization of the German empire*, and

the relations between France and Germany, were not in the leaſt affected by them.

The Ruſſian monarchs endeavoured, indeed, on more than one occaſion, to procure a certain degree of influence in the domeſtic affairs of the German empire. But until the commencement of the French revolution (and we muſt not forget that hitherto we have only been ſpeaking of the time which elapſed between the treaty of Weſtphalia, and that great event), their efforts remained entirely without ſucceſs. Thoſe who are acquainted with the hiſtory of the preſent times, will remember with what determined oppoſition the greater part of the German ſtates encountered the pretenſions of Ruſſia to the title of *guarantee of the treaty of Weſtphalia*, which ſhe claimed by a forced interpretation of a paſſage in the *treaty of Teſchen*; and that too at a time when the maintenance of the conſtitution founded on that treaty, was become extremely problematical, and when it was well known that the intentions of Ruſſia were to *preſerve*, and not to deſtroy it.

The relations exiſting between *France* and *Germany*, ſuffered no alteration whatever from the aggrandizement of Ruſſia. They rather received

ceived from this event, a greater degree of conſiſtency than they had ever before poſſeſſed: for as the attention and politics of the two great ſtates of Germany, eſpecially of Auſtria, were always principally, and often excluſively directed towards the undertakings of Ruſſia; France had on her part the leſs to dread from theirs

It may on the whole be ſafely aſſerted, that, of all the leading ſtates of Europe, France was the leaſt endangered by the increaſing greatneſs of Ruſſia; and that, under certain conditions, that event would have been leſs prejudicial to her than to any other. If we except the relations of commerce (which the French government, if it had known and attended to its own intereſts, might have cultivated as well as the Engliſh*), there was no immediate point of contact between France and Ruſſia; and ſo far was the mere exiſtence of the latter power from diſturbing the political ſyſtem of Europe to the diſadvantage of France, that, on the contrary, it ſtrengthened in a conſiderable degree, the juſt and beneficial influence of the cabinet of Verſailles, in the relations of all the weſtern and ſouthern ſtates. Conſidered in this light, ſhe was a tacit and uniform,

* The treaty concluded at Peterſburg in 1787, by an able negociator on the part of France, is a ſufficient proof of this.

though negative guarantee of the ſyſtem eſtabliſhed or confirmed by the treaty of Weſtphalia, inſtead of contributing to its diſſolution.

It muſt be confeſſed that even thoſe diſtant revolutions which Ruſſia projected in Turkey, and actually accompliſhed in Poland, could not be indifferent to France: but it was owing to accidental circumſtances, and to the weakneſs and miſtakes of thoſe who then managed the affairs of that country, that thoſe revolutions could be attempted, and in a certain degree executed. It is now well known and generally acknowledged, that the partition of Poland might have been prevented by the timely interference of France; and that Auſtria herſelf would have oppoſed that partition, if the French miniſtry had not expreſsly declared that they beheld it with indifference. It is no leſs certain, that France might have prevented the breaking out of the laſt war with Turkey, or otherwiſe have powerfully ſupported the Ottoman Porte, had not the beginning of her internal diſſenſions at that time, weakened her efforts, and diminiſhed her influence.

The intervention of Ruſſia in the political conſtitution of Europe, is not, therefore, one of the events which have weakened the principles of that

that conſtitution, and undermined the groundwork of the federal ſyſtem. The moſt important proviſions of the treaty of Weſtphalia remained unaltered; France, in particular, continued exactly in the ſituation in which ſhe had been placed by that peace, and by the ſubſequent treaties which confirmed or modified it. The general political relations were, indeed, rendered more extenſive and more intricate, but were not irreparably overturned, or materially and neceſſarily diſturbed by the intervention of Ruſſia: on the contrary, it is certain, that if the advantages to be derived from this new weight had been attended to with wiſdom, the law of nations, and the federal conſtitution of Europe, would have received from it an additional ſupport, and the means of bringing them nearer to perfection.

The elevation of Pruſſia from a ſubordinate ſtate to a power of the firſt rank and influence in Europe, is the ſecond of thoſe events to which the Author aſcribes the diſſolution of the ſyſtem founded on the treaty of Weſtphalia, with all the evil conſequences, in his opinion, reſulting therefrom. This event has certainly produced a more material and deciſive effect upon the two principal objects of the treaty of Weſtphalia, than the aggrandizement of Ruſſia. It has occaſioned great changes in the internal condition of Germany;

and likewiſe materially altered the relations between France and the German empire. The only remaining queſtion is, whether, after having candidly conſidered theſe changes in a proper point of view, we ſhall pronounce them prejudicial; and whether they can, with any appearance of truth, be reckoned among thoſe which have confounded, diſordered, and overturned the public law of Europe; have converted it into a chaos of contradiction and anarchy, and at length put an end to its exiſtence. Before we anſwer this queſtion, we muſt turn our attention to thoſe conſequences which the Author derives from the elevation of Pruſſia; partly with reſpect to the fate of *Germany in particular*, partly with regard to the political ſtate of *Europe in general.*

With reſpect to the affairs of the German empire, the following are the effects it is ſaid to have produced.

1ſt. It is aſſerted that "the diſputes between the Emperor and the ſtates of the Empire, have more frequently occaſioned war." This aſſertion is contradicted by hiſtory, provided we do not confound the *formation* of the greatneſs of Pruſſia with its *conſequences*. The firſt of theſe was certainly accompanied by one of the moſt deſtructive

wars of the eighteenth century. But ſince the time when Pruſſia roſe triumphant out of that war, not only has ſhe never once diſturbed the peace of Germany, but, on the contrary, has by turns protected the rights, and reconciled the differences of the ſmaller ſtates by her great preponderance in a conſiderable part of the Empire. If we except the ſhort campaign of 1778 (in which ſhe was evidently engaged with views of *preſervation*, not of *deſtruction)*, Pruſſia has not once taken arms in any of the diſputes between the ſtates of the Empire. From the year 1763, to the preſent day, no diſſenſions among the German princes, or between the chief of the Empire and its members, have terminated in open war: and ſo little has the power of Pruſſia tended to ſow diviſion in Germany, that, on the contrary, many domeſtic quarrels have been amicably concluded by its intervention.

2d. That "*France* has been eſtranged from the intereſts of the *German empire*, and the *German empire* from thoſe of *France*." This undoubtedly has been the conſequence of the increaſed influence of Pruſſia: but have its effects in this inſtance been prejudicial? If France was not ambitious of *ruling* in Germany, there were only two reaſonable objects which ſhe could ſeek to obtain by her arms, or her treaties; *ſecu-*

rity for herſelf, and *protection to the weaker princes of the Empire, againſt the attempts of the more powerful, particularly of the Emperor*. That the ſafety of the French frontiers has not been endangered by the elevation of Pruſſia, is a truth ſufficiently confirmed by experience; and the greatneſs of the Pruſſian monarchy has even proved an additional and very conſiderable ſecurity to France, againſt Auſtria, the moſt powerful ſtate of the Empire. But that with reſpect to the protection to be given to the ſmaller ſtates of the Empire, the part ſhould now be allotted to *Pruſſia* which had hitherto been acted by *France*, was certainly a fortunate change for thoſe countries themſelves; and if judged according to the true principles of politics, by no means an unfavourable one for France. She was now at liberty to devote to other undertakings, the force which had formerly been employed in giving this protection. She might now baniſh for ever from among the objects of her political attention, all anxiety for the fate of Germany, and every dread of the preponderance of Auſtria: the only juſtifiable motives for her interference in the thirty years war. If France had nothing more in view than her own ſafety and the protection of Germany, in her endeavours to maintain the treaty of Weſtphalia; if ſhe did not ſeek (in contradiction to all the principles of juſt and liberal

liberal politics) to make her influence in the Empire a pretence and a cloak for ambitious plans of uſurpation; ſhe could not but conſider the elevation of Pruſſia as an event in every reſpect advantageous to her; and as the ſureſt and moſt natural guarantee of the treaty of Weſtphalia: becauſe it created a power always ready and able to reſiſt every attempt injurious to the conſtitution.

3d. That "*the diſputes on the conſtitution of the Empire being no longer adjuſted by a third party, have been decided by force, and by the agreements or arbitrary will of the moſt powerful.*" The interference of a *third party* cannot ſurely be advantageous to any conſtitution in the diſputes that may ariſe on the interpretation of its proviſions; and hiſtory refutes the aſſertion, that force alone has prevailed in the Empire ſince France ceaſed to take a part in its internal affairs. The truth is, that the office of umpire, which France ſo often exerciſed with partiality, and ſo ſeldom for the advantage of the whole, became ſuperfluous by the elevation of Pruſſia; and that ſince that event an *internal* protector of the German conſtitution has taken the place of a *foreign* one: but if ever the queſtion ſhould ariſe, whether FRANCE *or* PRUSSIA *be the moſt proper guarantee of any great national intereſt?*

no

no true and well-informed friend of the German conſtitution could heſitate a moment to which to give the preference.

But, even ſuppoſing the great influence which France poſſeſſed in the affairs of Germany to have been beneficial to the Empire, and agreeable to the general ſyſtem of politics (which, after the preceding obſervations, I never can aſſent to), it muſt not be forgotten that the loſs of this influence to France was the effect of her own choice. It was not when the King of Pruſſia roſe to be a formidable rival of the greatneſs of Auſtria; but from the moment when the French miniſtry formed a new alliance with the Emperor, that the connexion between France and the princes of Germany was diſſolved for ever. The treaty of 1756 has been often repreſented, even by enlightened ſtateſmen before the revolution, and by a multitude of very violent, and often very ignorant writers ſince that period, as the firſt cauſe of the weakneſs and decay of the French monarchy*. All that we can ſay of the judgments of thoſe ſtateſmen, and of the declamations of theſe authors, is, that their ideas are highly exaggerated. Although true policy may have much to urge againſt the treaty of 1756, and ſtill more perhaps againſt the time

* Vide note B.

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at which it was concluded; it is, nevertheleſs, falſe (being in evident contradiction to hiſtory) that this treaty was a poſitive evil for France. A great part of the bad conſequences attributed to it, muſt be deduced from very different ſources; and thoſe who blame the meaſure, ſeem quite to have forgotten the great advantages France derived from it. However that may be, the treaty of 1750 was a formal renunciation on the part of the French miniſtry of the office of umpire in the affairs of Germany; the name at leaſt of which it had till then endeavoured to ſupport. France could not poſſibly be at the ſame time the confederate of the Emperor, and the ally of the Empire againſt an abuſe of power on the part of the Emperor. If, determined by motives of political prudence, France choſe to prefer the certain advantages of an alliance with Auſtria to the doubtful benefit of a protecting influence in the Empire, ſhe ſurely has no right to complain of the loſs of it. It was her own determination, her own policy, the immediate conſequence of a change in her own ſyſtem, and not the elevation of Pruſſia, or certainly not that alone, which deprived France of the part ſhe once had in the internal affairs of Germany.

4th. That "*the* PROTESTANT LEAGUE *no longer retains, as ſuch, even the name which denoted*

noted a community of rights and intereſts; and having aſſumed that of the power whoſe influence ſupplanted France, it is now only known by the title of the PRUSSIAN PARTY." Here the Author evidently lays down, as the conſequence of a ſingle event, what is in fact the reſult of much greater and more general changes. The Proteſtant party has certainly not ſuffered in the leaſt in its rights and liberties, or loſt any of its weight in the general affairs of the Empire ſince Pruſſia has been its patron. The diminution of its natural weight by the aggrandizement of that power, would be a very extraordinary and incomprehenſible phenomenon. So far as there ſtill exiſts in Germany a diſtinct Proteſtant intereſt, that intereſt muſt neceſſarily find itſelf more ſecure under the protection of a powerful Proteſtant ſtate, intimately connected with it, than under that of a foreign power, only occaſionally active in its behalf; a power, which, while defending this Proteſtant party, was acting in open contradiction to its own principles of internal policy; a power whoſe ſupport often ſecretly diſguſted the moſt determined enemies of the Imperial court: as no one could help obſerving, that it perſecuted with fire and ſword at home the religion it protected in Germany. The advantage to the Proteſtant ſtates

of exchanging the ſupport of ſuch a power for that of Pruſſia, was ſurely undeniable.

But it was not without reaſon that I expreſſed myſelf doubtfully as to the exiſtence of a diſtinct Proteſtant intereſt in Germany. If it ſhould be aſſerted that the Proteſtant party ſcarcely continues to exiſt even in name, the aſſertion would be at variance with the hiſtory of the preſent times, with the actual ſituation of the Empire and its preſent conſtitution. But it is certain, that much, very much, perhaps the greater part of what formerly characterized its exiſtence, has been loſt in the revolutions of ſociety. It is the ſpirit of the times alone which has brought about theſe changes, and not the elevation of Pruſſia, which would rather have had a contrary tendency. The differences of religion have loſt the importance which was formerly attached to them: the deep ſhades they caſt upon the face of ſociety, a century ago, are now ſoftened down. Opinions and articles of faith, which in former times have armed one half of Europe againſt the other, are now looked upon with coldneſs and indifference: the ſlighteſt political connexion binds men and ſtates more firmly now than all the profeſſions of religion in the world; and without entering here into any compariſon of the merits of what

now

now intereſts us, and of the objects that formerly uſed to agitate mankind, and occaſion the moſt important events; it is a truth eſtabliſhed by hiſtory, that the manners, intereſts, politics, factions, and enthuſiaſm, the wiſdom and folly of the preſent, are not thoſe of former times.

I think I have proved that the conſequences of the aggrandizement of Pruſſia, with reſpect to the *internal relations of Germany*, and *thoſe which formerly exiſted between France and the Empire*, are either not ſuch as the Author deſcribes them, or ought certainly not to be conſidered ſo unfavourable as he appears to think them. I conceive the conſtitution eſtabliſhed by the treaty of Weſtphalia, as far as it was in its nature capable of it, to have derived additional confirmation and ſupport from the elevation of Pruſſia; and it now remains for me to examine, whether the influence of that event upon the general ſyſtem of Europe, has, in fact, been ſo detrimental as the Author's repreſentation would incline us to believe.

Becauſe Pruſſia, in order to improve, and afterwards to maintain her ſituation, had recourſe to a new ſyſtem of war and government; becauſe ſhe invented new tactics, and had recourſe to the art of accumulating treaſures; and becauſe fear

fear or jealouſy induced the ſurrounding nations to adopt, on their parts, the ſame inſtruments of power; therefore, it is ſaid, has Pruſſia, by her principles and example, been the cauſe of thoſe unnatural efforts, and of that total enervation of all the European ſtates which has been the conſequence thereof. To maintain great armies, and to fill their coffers, they oppreſſed their ſubjects ſo much by levies of men and money, excited ſuch univerſal diſcontent, and ſtrained all the ſprings of power ſo immoderately, as to occaſion the general diſorder which enſued, and "*of which the war againſt the revolution was only the laſt reſult.*"

Whether this ſtatement of the caſe is really true; whether the general efforts were ſo overſtrained; the oppreſſion ſo intolerable; the debility ſo great and univerſal; and whether the revolution, with the war excited againſt it, was really the conſequence thereof, will be examined in another place. The queſtion here, is only, whether, and how far all theſe effects, if they do exiſt, and ſo far as they are ſuppoſed to exiſt, have been occaſioned by the elevation of Pruſſia.

It is evident that Pruſſia, with a territory comparatively ſmall, and interſected on all ſides, could

could never have riſen to a ſtate of the higheſt rank, and been able to maintain herſelf there, without new and extraordinary reſources. Whether the ſyſtem of amaſſing treaſure, and that of military conſcription, are the beſt, according to general ſpeculative ideas, is a queſtion I have nothing to do with. The ſituation, the wants, and the objects of *Pruſſia* conſidered, they were wiſe and uſeful for her. For *Pruſſia* they laid the foundations of a power which ſhe could otherwiſe never have attained; of a greatneſs, not merely dazzling and tranſitory, but ſolid and durable: and, what is more, the example of *Pruſſia* has proved, that a truly good adminiſtration, that a high degree of induſtry and wealth, that the proſperity of the ſtate, and the happineſs of individuals, are by no means incompatible with ſuch foundations of power. Pruſſia has really united them all: a fact which muſt put every theory to ſilence. At the breaking out of the French revolution (for that is ſtill the period to which all our conſiderations are at preſent directed) there exiſted no ſtate in Europe, at once ſo powerful and ſo happy as that of Pruſſia; governed with ſo much energy and wiſdom; ſo prepared for every foreign undertaking, and ſo ſafe from all internal commotion; ſo capable of the greateſt exertions, and ſo guarded againſt all diſorganization. If it be true that *Pruſſia* pointed out to

all

all Europe the way to ruin, it muſt at leaſt be confeſſed, that it took great care not to be itſelf the firſt to proceed upon it.

This ruin did not, however, originate in imprudent and untimely imitations of the Pruſſian ſyſtem of adminiſtration. Such an aſſertion is immediately refuted by hiſtory. The firſt and principal part of that ſyſtem, the *amaſſing of treaſure*, was not imitated by any one power of the firſt rank,—was not even attempted. And though certain forms of military conſcription, and particular principles of tactics, may in ſome inſtances have found imitators, it is nevertheleſs an undeniable fact, that every thing which eſſentially characterizes theſe methods, has remained excluſively peculiar to Pruſſia. The ſtrength of the Pruſſian army was in due proportion to the rank and influence univerſally conceded to that ſtate ſince the ſeven years war; nor did it give occaſion to any unnatural efforts even among its immediate neighbours, much leſs in countries at a diſtance from it.

If it be really true, that many governments in the eighteenth century exceeded their ſtrength in the efforts they made, the cauſe of this evil muſt be looked for in more early and leſs remarkable revolutions. The origin of the extenſive mili-

tary ſyſtem, and, of courſe, of all the conſequences reſulting from it, is to be found in *France*. The mighty armies, the brilliant adminiſtration, the ſplendid enterpriſes, the reſources, and the ſyſtem of finance of Louis XIV. were models for all the ſtates of Europe. At the time of the elevation of Pruſſia, the ſyſtem founded by Louis XIV. had arrived at maturity; the great outlines were laid down which every nation was obliged to fill, in order to maintain its importance in the general ſyſtem. It is the moſt remarkable circumſtance in the fate of Pruſſia, that ſhe was exalted by the ſuperior genius of one man, to a ſituation which ſeemed to have been originally denied to her. As ſoon as ſhe had attained this place, there no longer remained any choice with reſpect to her future conduct; ſhe was compelled to find the means of maintaining it in a laſting and honourable manner.

But if we take a more comprehenſive view of this ſubject, we ſhall find ourſelves much inclined to acquit even Louis XIV. of the greater part of thoſe reproaches which the ſhortſightedneſs of the preſent age has ſo abundantly heaped upon him. It was not Louis XIV. but the natural courſe of things, that produced thoſe great armies—that enlarged ſyſtem of adminiſtration—thoſe extenſive political plans. They were neceſſary

ceſſary conſequences of the progreſs of civil ſociety. In proportion to the advancement of civilization of induſtry and riches among nations, the meaſure of their wants, their deſires, their expenſes, their domeſtic and public exiſtence, is increaſed; the ſphere of their activity, their propenſity to extend their limits, the ambition and the power of their governments, are enlarged. A rich individual has more ſervants, more houſes, more horſes, more plans, and more caprices than a poor one: a rich and cultivated people have more public inſtitutions, more miniſters of ſtate, more ſoldiers, more luxury, and a greater ſpirit of enterpriſe, than one which is poor and uncivilized. This is all in the natural order of things. There may, no doubt, exiſt in the moſt opulent nation, a dangerous diſproportion between the means and the will; between the ſtrength and the deſires of ſuch a people; and, eſpecially, the military force, that great inſtrument of influence and dominion, may be out of all proportion to its foundation—the population and revenues of the country. But, whatever particular inſtances may be adduced of the tranſgreſſion of theſe rules of proportion, and of the errors of ſome governments; there was, on the whole, no ſuch diſproportion to be ſeen in general at the commencement of the revolution. The military force had advanced in a degree, and to a ſtate,

coinciding with the progreſs of ſociety. The ſudden aggrandizement, the influence, and the example of the kingdom of Pruſſia, did not puſh them beyond their juſt and natural limits. In all human probability, the armies of the remaining nations would have been no ſmaller, their ſyſtems of finance no leſs complicated, the relations between their efforts and their ſtrength no other than they actually were, had this new meteor never riſen in the political firmament of Europe.

The elevation of Pruſſia has therefore, in no reſpect, been productive of pernicious conſequences. It has in no ſhape tended to ſubvert the ſyſtem eſtabliſhed by the treaty of Weſtphalia. As to the firſt fundamental object of this treaty, the internal conſtitution of the empire, ſo far has it been from deſtroying it, that it has, on the contrary, more than ever confirmed and ſecured it. With regard to the next principal object which it had in view, the relations between France and Germany; it has occaſioned no other changes in theſe, than ſuch as were generally beneficial, and not eſſentially prejudicial to France; ſuch as France herſelf deſired, and contributed to effect by her own political meaſures. It is equally untrue, that Pruſſia has diſturbed the general balance of Europe: ſhe has only kept pace with the

the continual progreſs made by other nations, without forcibly or unnaturally haſtening it; ſhe has only diſplayed in a peculiar degree, the art of making this progreſs with more regularity, more order, and more firmneſs than others, perhaps than any others engaged in the ſame career.

If after all this we conſider, that Pruſſia, from the moment when ſhe was firmly eſtabliſhed, became a bulwark to all the weſt of Europe, againſt the attempts of Ruſſia, and a neceſſary counterbalance to that empire, after its intervention in the general affairs of Europe; that a power ſo happily ſituated in the centre of the reſt, and in the midſt of their principal connexions, preſented a conſtant barrier to every violent uſurpation; that if the ſafety of France could require any additional ſupport, it received a new one from the elevation of Pruſſia; that the powers of Europe, if duly ſenſible of their true and common intereſts, muſt have found it neceſſary to create ſuch a ſtate, if fate or genius had not anticipated them; if we further conſider what extenſive benefit has been produced during half a century, by the influence of a nation governed with ſo much energy and wiſdom, with reſpect to the general cultivation of mankind, induſtry, literature, the art of government, and every thing exalted and valuable among men; and what uſe-

ful leſſons, what glorious examples, it has afforded to its cotemporaries, and to poſterity :—it will not be eaſy to conceive how the elevation of Pruſſia can ever be ranked among the immediate, or even collateral cauſes of the decay and diſorganization of Europe.

The third great event, which, according to the Author, invaded the ſyſtem eſtabliſhed by the treaty of Weſtphalia, and at length totally ſubverted it, was the prodigious increaſe of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem in all parts of the world.

This event (if that may properly be called an event, which is in reality no more than a gradual and ſtill progreſſive expanſion of human activity) has affected the intereſts of ſociety, more than any other which has taken place in the political world ſince the treaty of Weſtphalia. It has opened an immenſe field to the induſtry, the arts, the ideas, the enjoyments, and the paſſions of mankind : it has multiplied the inſtruments of power, the combinations of politics, and the objects of deſire ; and by adding to the charm and ſplendour of dominion, it has been the cauſe of jealouſies, diſſenſions, and, doubtleſs, of wars. It has even been the groundwork in the interior of ſtates, of a great revolution in all the relations of

of ſociety. The only queſtion is, whether, conſidering all this in the moſt comprehenſive point of view, it will appear to be an evil; and particularly, whether the maintenance of a political balance in Europe, is abſolutely incompatible with all theſe changes; whether the exiſting political conſtitution muſt neceſſarily have been ſubverted by the increaſed commercial and colonial ſyſtem; whether it really was ſo, and whether the extenſion of European commerce, and the multiplication of trans-European connexions, led to the decay and diſorganization of all nations, and finally paved the way for their future ſubjection.

I ſhall only here examine the general relations of this queſtion: the Author has entered upon it with a view almoſt excluſively to *England*, which has given him an opportunity of introducing at the beginning of his book, in a very ingenious and brilliant manner, his favourite theme:— "That during the laſt 150 years, England has "oppreſſed the induſtry of all other countries, "has threatened their independence, and en- "couraged their mutual diſſenſions; and that, "in fact, the only danger which menaces Eu- "rope, ariſes from the tyrannical pretenſions of "the commercial politics of GREAT BRITAIN." He has uſed this favourable opportunity in its utmoſt extent. I intend to follow a different me-

thod.—The queſtion, What has England hitherto been in the general ſyſtem of Europe? What may, or ſhould it continue to be? or (as it has been the cuſtom to expreſs it of late) "the problem, How to render the exiſtence of the Britiſh empire compatible with the intereſts and exiſtence of the remaining ſtates?" is, without doubt, one of the moſt important which at the preſent moment can occupy the politician. It is on this account that it appears moſt adviſable to me, to unite, as much as poſſible, under one head, all that relates to this great queſtion, which I ſhall endeavour to compriſe and arrange in ſome general points of view, in a chapter devoted to the preſent relations of the leading powers. I promiſe, however, in the mean time, not to paſs over a ſingle obſervation of any conſequence made by the Author; nor to leave unexamined any argument to be found in his work.

It is my opinion, that the extenſion of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem cannot have been a *neceſſary* cauſe of the ſubverſion of the federal conſtitution of Europe, and that it could only have proved the *accidental* cauſe of ſuch a ſubverſion, by means of accidental errors or misfortunes, which might in any other circumſtances have been made or experienced. This reſts upon the following grounds:

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1ſt. The commercial and colonial ſyſtem has not diſordered the fundamental articles of the treaty of Weſtphalia. This point, after what has been ſaid in the preceding pages, will not require an elaborate inveſtigation. The groundwork of the German conſtitution was hardly in any reſpect affected by the extenſion of the ſyſtem of commerce; neither did it occaſion any important alteration in the relations between France and Germany. The new relations which it created, were all of them ſuch as had never been thought of at the treaty of Weſtphalia; ſuch as were then neither foreſeen nor conjectured; and ſuch as in every reſpect were beyond the ſphere of the ſyſtem of public law, eſtabliſhed by that treaty. Of theſe unavoidable circumſtances, thoſe only can complain who conſider the treaty of Weſtphalia as the foundation of a general federal conſtitution, which it never was, nor ever could be. That which it did really eſtabliſh, remained entire to the end of the eighteenth century; but it was not in human wiſdom to make regulations for what did not exiſt at the time.

2d. The extenſion of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem was not the immediate effect of the avarice or ambition of any particular European ſtate; it was a general, neceſſary, and unavoidable

unavoidable reſult of the expanſion of the human mind; and every event derived from that ſource, muſt be, in ſome way, compatible with the objects of ſocial exiſtence, and of courſe with the maintenance and ſecurity of a federal conſtitution and a law of nations.

I am here engaged in the diſcuſſion of a particular object, and not writing a general hiſtory of human nature. But whoever has thoroughly inveſtigated this ſubject, will readily allow me, that, in a ſtate of ſociety, the different branches of human activity are gradually and ſucceſſively developed, each at its proper period; that when agriculture and manufactures have arrived at a certain degree of perfection, the deſire of foreign commerce is naturally awakened; that although the object of this propenſity may be retarded or accelerated by adverſe or favourable circumſtances, the perſevering activity of mankind will ſooner or later accompliſh it; that it will at length gain acceſs to diſtant and unexplored regions, and ſucceed in its unremitted endeavours to connect all the parts of the earth; that the produce of remote countries becomes a new ſpur to induſtry, and induſtry, ſo excited, explores and cultivates thoſe lands; ſo that the productions of new regions operate to increaſe the activity and

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to multiply the commercial relations of the old; that this gives new life even to the interior of the more civilized countries, and multiplies the objects of traffic; that induſtry produces riches, and riches reproduce induſtry; and thus commerce at length becomes the foundation and the cement of the whole ſocial edifice.

This is not determined by the preſumption or caprice of man; it is founded on the eternal order of human nature, and is the effect of that irreſiſtible impulſe, by which every great and beneficial change, every truly univerſal and important event in the hiſtory of mankind, is produced. To this principle we muſt refer not only the origin but the progreſs and extenſion of commerce. Hence too the important diſcovery of America; for we may confidently aſſert, that it could not ultimately have eſcaped mankind, had it not been accompliſhed ſo early by the adventurous ſpirit of a few extraordinary and enterpriſing men*. Hence the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization, with all its actual and poſſible ramifications and extent. Hence the independence of remote climes, not created nor cultivated for us only, and the new ſources of opulence to which Europe is invited by their

* Vide Note C.

freedom

freedom and independence. Hence too humanity will hereafter derive many invaluable bleſſings, will behold many a ſplendid æra, if the free diſplay of this active principle be not checked by blind authority, and if human ingenuity do not aſpire to be wiſer than Divine Providence.

If we conſider the ſubject in this point of view, which to me appears the only proper one, we ſhall not eaſily be perſuaded to attribute the origin or the extenſion of the ſyſtem of commerce to any particular law of any ſingle ſtate, or to any individual, be it Cromwell or Colbert, whom hatred or partiality ſhall fix upon. Adhering to the plan which I have propoſed to myſelf, it will be the province of a ſubſequent chapter to prove, and I hope there to prove moſt ſatisfactorily, that the Engliſh Navigation Act is neither the only nor the principal cauſe of the commercial greatneſs of England; that this celebrated law is not rightly underſtood, when ſuppoſed to be creative, ſince its nature is, in fact, reſtrictive; that it is in no wiſe unjuſt, tyrannical, or hoſtile towards other nations; and that, when judged upon the true principles of commercial right and policy, it is nothing like "the foundation of a continued conſpiracy, and an eternal warfare againſt the induſtry of all other countries."

countries." I will return at preſent to my general reaſoning.

If it be true that the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization was one of the fruits deſtined to grow and ripen in the ſoil of ſociety, the roots of this ſyſtem muſt be ſomehow connected with thoſe of the whole ſocial conſtitution. The natural propenſities of man, particularly thoſe of which the general and conſtant influence determines the fate of ſociety, are ſeldom found in contradiction to each other. That there ſhould be any great ſpring of human action in its nature inimical to ſociety; tending to involve nations in endleſs hoſtility; to ſubvert the law of nations, and even render its exiſtence impoſſible; and finally to bring about the decay and ruin of empires; would be extremely unnatural, and is therefore very much to be doubted. The ſyſtem of commerce, with all its errors, could not produce ſuch effects, and in fact never has: that in ſome inſtances it has been the cauſe of wars, is certain; but what has not been the cauſe of war? That it has ſometimes created diſcord in the federal conſtitution of Europe, will not be denied; but can ſuch a conſtitution be expected to exiſt without periodical diſturbances? Upon the whole, the ſyſtem of commerce, with all its conſequences,

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the pre-eminent riches of ſome countries, their naval power, their foreign poſſeſſions, and their new influence (diſproportioned to the extent of their European territory), had adapted itſelf exceedingly well to the former ſocial relations of Europe; and if extraordinary and unexpected convulſions had not, from the year 1789, ſhaken the whole edifice to its foundations, and looſened every part of it, the queſtion, Does there ſtill exiſt a law of nations? would probably, at this time, have been abſurd, notwithſtanding all the changes occaſioned or haſtened by that ſyſtem. This will, I hope, appear more plainly from the obſervations that will follow in the next Part of the work, in which the ſituation of Europe, at the commencement of the French revolution, will be more particularly diſcuſſed.

3dly. The influence of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem was not confined to any particular countries; all of them were more or leſs engaged in it.

The European eſtabliſhments in all quarters of the world, which neceſſarily promoted the extenſion of commerce and induſtry, were very far from being a monopoly in the hands of the nations immediately intereſted in them. They were a general advantage, of which, by degrees,

every country in Europe received its ſhare. Thoſe which, by their ſituation and habits, were devoted to navigation, were the firſt to enjoy theſe advantages; but however deſirous they might have been of preſerving them excluſively, the natural courſe of things preſented inſurmountable obſtacles to the accompliſhment of ſuch wiſhes. The vent of their produce awakened on every ſide, and in the moſt inland parts of the continent, the ſame activity, the ſame deſires, and the ſame arts as thoſe which ſtimulated, inſpired, and aſſiſted the maritime ſtates in their undertakings. Theſe nations were even ſometimes, as in the examples of Spain and Portugal, only the channel, between whoſe uncultivated and unfruitful banks the enlivening ſtream of induſtry and riches flowed to happier regions. The condition of ſociety was in every reſpect advanced and refined. With the wealth and improvement of individuals, the ſum of thoſe means and reſources which conſtitute the ſtrength of nations, was increaſed. All countries were benefited; but all nearly in the ſame proportion. The whole became more rich, more powerful, and more civilized; but the proportions between the component parts remained the ſame.

I do not mean to aſſert, that this participation of advantages ariſing from the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization, amounted to an abſolute equality among all the parties concerned. The progreſs muſt naturally have been greater and more rapid in thoſe countries where the new ſeeds of induſtry, commerce, and riches found a ſoil prepared to receive them; or, where a favourable ſituation, the diſpoſitions and capacities of the inhabitants, or the peculiarities of their civil and political conſtitution, promoted their growth in a more remarkable degree. The conſequences of the general change were certainly more perceptible in France than in Germany, in England and Holland, than in Ruſſia or Poland; and the effects produced on the proportions of their national ſtrength, muſt have operated more rapidly and immediately in the former than the latter. That theſe inequalities ſhould diſturb the general balance, is an effect which the ſyſtem of commerce only has in common with every other cauſe of ſocial improvement. No federal conſtitution on earth can preſerve the ſtates which compoſe it during centuries exactly in their original relative ſituations. No federal conſtitution can enſure an unaltered continuance of the preciſe maſs of reſpective ſtrength, which was the groundwork of its formation, or even the preſervation of the ſame proportions in the exten-

ſion of that maſs. Even if the ſyſtem of commerce had never exiſted, the varieties of national character and induſtry, the different conſtitutions of the ſtates of Europe, and many accidental circumſtances, would have created a diverſity in their ſeveral attainments; and accordingly the machine of government, which always follows the progreſs of individuals, would have been more or leſs complete in each. Foreign trade was only one of the many and various ſprings which ſet this great machine in motion. If commerce, with all its attendant benefits, had remained the excluſive property of a few ſtates; and had theſe favoured nations alone attained to a higher degree of civilization and wealth, and acquired deſpotic influence in the fate of Europe, while other countries continued in barbariſm, poverty, and relative weakneſs; it would then, perhaps, have been allowable to ſay, that the colonial ſyſtem had ſubverted the federal conſtitution of Europe. But ſince the caſe is otherwiſe; ſince, in the extenſive ſcene of activity, induſtry, and opulence, which the progreſs of commerce has diſplayed, no ſtate whatever has remained an idle ſpectator; ſince all have taken a lively part in it, and all have been in a great, though, perhaps, not altogether equal meaſure, gainers by it; it is not poſſible that this ſyſtem

ſhould have been a cauſe of the general decay, or total diſſolution of the federative conſtitution.

4thly. Even the ſuperior advantage accruing from the *immediate* poſſeſſion of commerce and colonies, was divided among ſeveral nations, and therefore eſtabliſhed in the general balance of Europe, a new and diſtinct balance of the maritime and commercial ſtates.

Nations enabled to found colonies, and monopolize their commerce; to carry on an extenſive navigation, and to ſupply the neighbouring ſtates with the productions of the remoteſt parts of the earth, muſt have derived a more direct, and of courſe a greater benefit from the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization, under circumſtances otherwiſe equal, than thoſe excluded by the nature of their ſituation from ſuch undertakings. The fate of Spain and Portugal ſufficiently evinces that this rule is not without exceptions; for they poſſeſſed the fineſt colonies in the world, and yet fell into a ſtate of poverty and decay unknown to any other continental power; which ſhows, that the advantages of commerce and colonization are only conditional, depending on the induſtry, morals, legiſlation, and polity of the mother-country.

country. But where it is eſtabliſhed under a wholeſome government, and ſupported by the native induſtry, the character, and civil conſtitution of the country; there the ſyſtem of commerce is ſoon productive of ſtriking advantages. Had all theſe favourable circumſtances been united in a ſingle nation, it would neceſſarily have attained an extraordinary, and perhaps dangerous pre-eminence; but they were fortunately poſſeſſed by ſeveral at once, and particularly by three, France, England, and Holland.

It is a circumſtance ſomewhat extraordinary, that a French writer ſhould ſpeak of the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization in terms as if it had only benefited other nations, to the prejudice of France; as if England alone had derived advantages from it, to the detriment of the reſt of Europe; and as if his own country had not been one of the moſt ſucceſsful in the acquiſition of all thoſe advantages. If the poſſeſſion of colonies, and the habits of commerce, have diſturbed the general balance of Europe, it cannot have done this in a manner unfavourable to France, who had a principal ſhare in that commerce; but, on the contrary, to her advantage, and unfavourably for the remaining ſtates of the continent. I will ſay nothing here of the

trade to the Levant, always ſo large a ſource of induſtry and riches to France ; but France ruled in the Eaſt Indies till the middle of the eighteenth century, and even retained, when that dominion had ceaſed, ſome valuable poſſeſſions there ; France poſſeſſed the fineſt and moſt fertile provinces on the continent of America ; France is, even at this day, in the poſſeſſion of the beſt of all the iſlands in the Weſt Indies, which, in the year 1789, was equal in value to the reſt of the Antilles taken together. It is indeed true, that the advantage derived from theſe great poſſeſſions, was not always equal to their importance, and that falſe principles and errors of adminiſtration, as well as unfortunate wars, conſiderably diminiſhed their value. But France, nevertheleſs, long remained the firſt, and always continued to be the ſecond commercial and maritime ſtate in Europe : there was no ſea unfrequented by her veſſels ; no coaſt unoccupied by her factories and eſtabliſhments ; no branch of any conſequence in the whole ſphere of commerce, in which ſhe did not vie with the other maritime nations. Her navy was ſometimes reduced to a comparative inſignificancy ; but it always recovered itſelf again ; and only ten years before the revolution, had arrived at ſuch a pitch of greatneſs as to be able to cope with that of England. Her commerce with all

parts

parts of the world was ſo flouriſhing, and the profits of it ſo great, that the quantity of ſpecie in circulation generally exceeded the wants of the country; and St. Domingo alone, upon the reſpectable authority of Mr. Neckar, did not add leſs than ſeventy millions per annum to the balance in bullion. Surely a man has no juſt ground of complaint againſt the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization, who belongs to a nation deriving ſuch extraordinary advantages from it.

It is not here worth while to inquire whether the ignorance or the avarice of individuals in other countries may have made them look with an evil eye on this ſtate of things; but it is certain, that no enlightened perſon in Europe could have envied France the advantages ſhe enjoyed. That the commerce of the world ſhould be divided between three, nearly equally favoured nations, was the moſt fortunate circumſtance the others could have deſired: it enſured to them an extenſive competition; it occaſioned variety and activity in the relations of commerce; it provided, in the moſt natural manner, againſt that abuſe of power, which might have been favoured by the undivided ſway of a ſingle nation. No one will entertain a doubt, but that, had it not been for the revolution, this beneficial competition would not

eaſily have been deſtroyed; it would have laſted; it would have been ſtill further improved; and nothing but the ſhocks which France has experienced in the ruin of her monarchy, could have annihilated it, as they have done for a time.

5thly. The ſtrength which ſome countries derived from the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization, produced a new weight in the general balance, to be occaſionally oppoſed with advantage to the preponderance of any continental nation.

The federal conſtitution of nations can never be ſo completely organized, ſo carefully and exactly balanced, as to prevent every attempt to deſtroy the equilibrium and oppreſs the reſt, on the part of powers invited by favourable circumſtances, or impelled by enterpriſing princes. In theſe periods of danger, it is fortunate for the political ſyſtem, if there exiſts a counterbalance of a diſtinct nature, which may be uſed to counteract the dangers of the federal conſtitution, and which, by a proper application, may reſiſt the attempts of an ambitious power upon the ſecurity and independence of its neighbours.

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A counterbalance of this nature was formed as early as the end of the ſeventeenth century by England and Holland, in conſequence of the progreſs of the commercial ſyſtem. Theſe two nations, that could not then vie with any of the principal ſtates of the continent, in extent of territory, population, or military force, acquired a degree of influence and importance by their riches and naval ſtrength, that enabled them to make head againſt the moſt powerful. They more than once defended and maintained the balance, when Europe had reaſon to tremble for its ſafety. I ſhall here only mention the reign of Lewis XIV. and particularly the time which elapſed between the treaties of Nimeguen and of Ryſſwick; partly becauſe that period preſents a moſt remarkable and inſtructive example, and partly becauſe it has pleaſed the Author to adduce this very example in illuſtration of his opinions reſpecting the prejudicial influence of the maritime ſtates.

His reaſoning on the ſubject of the league of Augſburg in 1686, would induce us to believe, that the founder of that league only ſought, wantonly, and without cauſe, to diſturb the peace of Europe; to weaken the French monarchy; and, by uniting England and Holland, to concentrate in his own hands, all the ſprings

of that preponderating naval ſtrength, which, as the author expreſſes himſelf, "had rendered his former country ſo dangerous to Europe."

This repreſentation of the caſe appears to me not leſs arbitrary than new: it is certainly at variance with all former opinions concerning the relations and events of that time. Whether the Prince of Orange was influenced in ſecret by intereſted views, when he brought about the coalition of Augſburg; whether the deſire of aſcending the throne of England, or perſonal enmity to the King of France, were the true motives of his conduct; are queſtions not to be diſcuſſed in this place. We have nothing to do with the meaſure of his private worth; we are conſidering the public merit and political good effects of his actions. To aſſert that the tendency and reſult of his plans, the able and perſevering oppoſition which he made to Lewis XIV. undermined the ſecurity of the federal ſyſtem, and ſowed the ſeeds of anarchy and diſorder, is no leſs paradoxical, than it is abſurd to ſay, that the maritime power of Holland was ever dangerous to Europe.

We need only throw a haſty glance upon the circumſtances under which the league of Augſburg was formed, to diſcover the object and the

the nature of that league; completely explained by the hiſtory of its origin. Lewis XIV. had not only threatened, but actually violated the integrity of all his neighbours. He had invaded the Netherlands, only eight years after the peace of the Pyrenees, and ſecured a conſiderable part of his conqueſts by the treaty of Aix, which nothing but the fear of the triple alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden, induced him to accede to. He had immediately after that, under a pretext ſtill more futile, commenced a war againſt Holland, by which that flouriſhing republic was reduced to the brink of ruin. The treaty of Nimeguen increaſed his dominions, his influence, and the terror of his name in Europe: but this was not ſufficient for his ambition; he was a conqueror in the midſt of peace: by judicial ſentences he adjudged to himſelf lands, cities, and the right of ſovereignty; explained the treaty of Weſtphalia according to his own opinion, and forced the town of Straſburg to capitulate. Such was his conduct towards the Emperor, the Empire, Spain, the Italian princes; and thus did he force all his neighbours, whatever might otherwiſe be their principles or opinions, to ſeek protection in common meaſures, againſt a common enemy.

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By proceedings of another, though not leſs odious nature, he awakened the ſpirit of religion, ſo powerful at that time in a conſiderable part of Europe. The revocation of the edict of Nantes, and the cruel perſecution of the Proteſtants, excited the greateſt anger and abhorrence in all Proteſtant countries; England and Holland, eſpecially, took the alarm; they beheld the French monarch armed with double terrors; one common ruin threatened their independence and their religion; and William of Orange became what his anceſtors had formerly been, the hero and guardian angel of religious and political liberty.

Under theſe auſpices the league of Augſburg was formed; and if ever the conduct, the plans, and the progreſs of any power, could juſtify the reſt in making preparations in common for the ſafety of the whole, that league was juſtified. The confederates, moreover, confined themſelves ſtrictly to the real and juſt object of their truly defenſive alliance. The maintenance of the treaty of Weſtphalia was the baſis of all their conferences; the only aim which they had in view, was to compel France to be juſt.

The Emperor, many of the princes of the Empire, the King of Spain, the Duke of Savoy, all engaged in this confederacy. Theſe, for the moſt

moſt part Catholic princes, were aſſembled under the ſtandard of a Proteſtant Stadtholder of Holland; of a prince who was on the point of driving the Catholic line of the Houſe of Stuart from the throne of England. Theſe facts are not a little ſtrange and ſurpriſing, when we conſider the temper of thoſe times: but the more they are ſtrange and wonderful, ſo much the more ſtrongly do they expreſs the danger in which the balance and independence of Europe appeared to the allies of the Prince of Orange. It was a confederacy dictated by neceſſity, and not a matter of choice or inclination. The allies beheld in the perſon of the Stadtholder, the protector of their common rights againſt the common enemy; they ſaw in the Catholic poſſeſſor of the Engliſh throne, an open or ſecret ally of that common enemy. All other conſiderations yielded to this important one. They declared themſelves againſt the prince who favoured the diſturber of the general balance; they took part with him by whoſe prudence and activity they were aſſured of its preſervation*.

That, at that time, "*France alone* conducted herſelf in conformity to the true principles of the federal ſyſtem, and the univerſal maxims of the political balance, while all other nations made no ſcruple of violating them," is an aſſertion that

* Vide Note D.

requires

requires no refutation ; becauſe, to point out its falſehood in the cleareſt manner, it is only neceſſary to mention it ; and becauſe the hiſtory of thoſe times confutes it in every point. If Lewis XIV. had met with no oppoſition, the treaty of Weſtphalia would already have been an empty name at the end of the ſame century in which it was formed. To ſave the independence and federal conſtitution of Europe from total ruin, to preſerve and ſecure the general balance, was the work and the merit of the coalition of which the Prince of Orange was the founder and director.

I think I have ſufficiently proved that the extenſion of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem is by no means incompatible with the principles of the federal conſtitution of Europe. The nature and character of that ſyſtem contained no eſſential cauſe of any dreadful revolution ; and we are taught by experience, that, ſo far from having occaſioned ſuch an one, it has, on the contrary, added ſuch power to ſome nations, as to form a beneficial counterpoiſe ; whereby the federal conſtitution has more than once been defended againſt dangers that threatened its ſecurity.

The influence of the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization in the improvement and aggrandizement of the maritime ſtates, was not, therefore (any

(any more than the elevation of Ruſſia and Pruſſia), a cauſe of the diſſolution of the federal union, and of the ſubverſion of public law. Theſe three great events of the eighteenth century have had important conſequences, but have no connection whatever with thoſe aſſumed by the Author. If the condition of Europe at the breaking out of the French revolution, was really ſo deſperate as he has painted it, we muſt ſearch elſewhere for the cauſe of that misfortune.

If I have been ſucceſsful in attempting to ſhow that hiſtory does not confirm the Author's aſſertion of the influence of thoſe three events; and that a due conſideration of their immediate and remote conſequences, will even juſtify concluſions almoſt directly oppoſite to his; I conceive that I have already made much progreſs againſt the groundwork of his ſyſtem: the aſſertion, "that at the time of the revolution there no longer exiſted a veſtige of the law of nations, and that Europe was on every ſide in a ſtate of the greateſt diſorder." For if thoſe events from which he endeavours to deduce and explain this general diſorganization, neither have had, nor in their nature could have ſuch an effect; this erroneous induction gives a very ſuſpicious appearance to the whole fabric of his reaſoning; and the well-founded ſuppoſition ariſes, that theſe facts may probably

probably never have exiſted at all, which ſuch changes in the relations of the political ſyſtem were incapable of producing.

But it is now time to meet that firſt aſſertion of his in a more direct manner; it is time to attack it in its leading points, and to proceed immediately to examine the queſtion, "In what ſtate was the federal ſyſtem of Europe at the commencement of the French revolution?"

CHAP. III.

Did there exiſt at the Beginning of the French Revolution any public Law in Europe?

THE Author is not ſatisfied with giving a decided negative to this queſtion. He goes farther, and draws a gloomy and depreſſing picture of the ſocial conſtitution of Europe, in the laſt years which preceded the revolution. "It was impoſſible not to obſerve" (ſuch are the expreſſions he makes uſe of), "that there had long ſince ceaſed to exiſt any maxims of government, any federal union, any fixed political principles in Europe; that an imaginary principle of aggrandizement, in fact nothing more than

than a forcible, unnatural, and deſtructive exertion, had faſcinated all governments; that the powers of Europe were involved in general miſery; that bankruptcy ſtood at the door of every government; and that a ſingle nation, graſping at the riches of all the reſt, converted the misfortune of the whole to its own excluſive advantage: that the ſame cauſes which produced the diſorganization of ſociety in France, had ſown the ſeeds of political anarchy throughout the whole of Europe; that the law of nations no longer exiſted, except in appearance; and that the revolution was only a loud and formal annunciation of its long-determined diſſolution."

It is of the greateſt importance that we ſhould examine carefully every feature of this picture. If the pencil has here been guided by truth, and if the political ſtate of Europe, the internal and external relations of all countries, were really ſuch; then the French revolution will appear not only completely explained, but juſtified, and more than juſtified. It would, in that caſe, only be the natural end of a long ſeries of evil, the breaking out, the deciſive criſis of a diſorder which had long preyed upon the conſtitution of ſociety; a violent but ſalutary fever in a body long diſeaſed.

We ſhould then ceaſe altogether to deplore a revolution, to which we are indebted for the only chance of recovery remaining; which diſcovered to us the abyſs into which we were plunged, and the means of extricating ourſelves; which has convinced us of the extreme defectiveneſs of all our former principles of government and maxims of policy; of all former ſyſtems of adminiſtration and public law. This revolution, then, has been a beneficial and active principle of general renovation, "by putting to the proof the little ſtrength which yet remained to us." It has ſubverted every thing, that all might be ordered anew; by the ſufferings inflicted, it has awakened a ſentiment of deſpair, which ought long before to have exiſted for our own ſafety; it has made us acquainted with our ſituation, our wants, our dangers, our ſtrength, and our means; it has overwhelmed us, in order to raiſe us again to a more exalted ſtate, and to ſecure us for ever againſt all future errors.

Such is the aſpect of the revolution, as painted by the Author in the whole train of his reaſoning. He has not expreſſly deſcribed it thus; for it was a part of his plan to paſs over as much as poſſible in ſilence, the *revolution itſelf*, and only to ſpeak of the *war againſt the revolution* as of a thing altogether diſtinct from and independent of it.

But

But I am induced to conclude, that he conſidered it only, or at leaſt principally, in this point of view, by the general courſe of his argument, and by a number of occaſional obſervations in different parts of his work; beſides, any one who will affirm that the war againſt the revolution was a neceſſary conſequence of the diſordered ſtate of civil ſociety, will not, and cannot indeed, with any conſiſtency, forbear to aſcribe the revolution itſelf to the ſame ſource.

Of the whole of this account of the cauſes and conſequences of the revolution, the two following are the only points to which I can aſſent: 1ſt, there exiſted in the internal, ſocial, and domeſtic ſtate of moſt European countries, and particularly of the French monarchy, certain diſcordances, ſuch as might lead to great convulſions, and which, when thoſe convulſions did take place, might in general be looked upon, with reaſon, as the preparatory cauſes of them; and ſecondly, the revolution has had the accidental good effect of diſcovering and pointing out, in the cleareſt and moſt impreſſive manner, to all governments, the imperfections exiſting in their former conſtitutions, or in the ancient ſederation of Europe.

On the other hand, I am convinced, and I truſt that all enlightened perſons will now agree with me, that the condition of Europe in the latter times preceding the revolution, was not ſo deſperate either in a ſocial, a domeſtic, or a federative point of view, as to lead immediately to violent convulſions, or to render ſuch convulſions deſirable; that the French revolution, though facilitated, and in that ſenſe prepared, by many ſocial and political diſcordances, was by no means a neceſſary or unavoidable conſequence of the ſtate of France, much leſs of Europe; that this event, with all its dreadful conſequences, was occaſioned by ſome obvious errors of the former French government—was continued and completed by the untimely zeal, the ill-adviſed activity, the inability, the preſumption, or the wickedneſs of thoſe who, in conſequence of theſe errors, were intruſted with the direction of the public affairs—and was converted into a principle of deſtruction for all Europe by the improvident meaſures of the ſurrounding nations; that, far from furthering the improvement of the condition of civil and political ſociety, this revolution, on the contrary, has interrupted and arreſted its progreſs at a moment when it appeared particularly promiſing; and that, when conſidered in a more extenſive point of view, the greateſt and moſt lamentable of the evils which accompanied it,

it, was this: before the revolution there only needed a few wiſe reforms in the internal conſtitutions of ſtates, and ſome happy combinations for ameliorating and confirming the federal ſyſtem, to have raiſed Europe to a high degree of proſperity and happineſs; whereas now all the means of attaining to this deſired object muſt be ſought for amidſt a heap of ruins, and drawn forth, as it were, from chaos again.

In this ſeries of important truths, the principal one is that to which the reaſoning of our Author immediately conducts us. That we may judge with accuracy what Europe owes to the revolution, we muſt, before all things, be acquainted with its ſituation when the revolution broke out; we muſt have before our eyes the leading features, at leaſt, of the true picture of ſociety, as well with reſpect to the internal condition of ſtates, as with regard to their external relations.

Very great improvements had been made by all the governments of Europe, in every thing relating to the management of public affairs, and the principles of adminiſtration, ſince the middle of the eighteenth century. As the laſt remains of the feudal ſyſtem were aboliſhed, the fetters were deſtroyed by which the hands of ſovereigns had long been confined and reſtrained in the free

exercise of their authority. The increasing wealth of their states presented new objects for their activity, and fresh incitements to various undertakings; while, at the same time, it afforded the means of accomplishing them. The progressive improvement of the minds of men contributed likewise to the general advancement. It has been asserted, that all the favourable changes brought about in this period, were owing to the labours of public writers. But these writers were themselves, in fact, the creatures of the general improvement; I mean the great mass of them, those who had a wide and extensive influence on the minds of their cotemporaries; not those men of extraordinary genius, who sometimes burst, like splendid meteors, through the deep gloom of an age of barbarism. The productions of genius only become the daily occupation of mankind, and a powerful aid of social advancement, when the increase of wealth has promoted the progress of civilization; when the desire of more refined enjoyments has been awakened; and, above all, when governments have attained a certain liberality of principle, and have been enlightened and improved.

Without inquiring, however, which was the first, or the last, in the chain of causes that produced these great changes, the event is clear and undeniable.

undeniable. There aroſe in all the principal ſtates without exception, and more or leſs in moſt of the ſmaller ones, a ſpirit of advancement and improvement, extending to every branch of the public adminiſtration, which the body of the people communicated to the governors, and which theſe again re-imparted to their ſubjects. The neceſſity of a reviſal of the exiſting laws, and particularly of the criminal code, was every where felt. Meaſures were taken for encouraging induſtry, for promoting agriculture, for extending commerce: while high roads, and canals and plantations, and public edifices of every kind, began to enrich and embelliſh all countries. In the place of the ancient ſyſtem of taxation, often oppreſſive and unjuſt, much pains were every where beſtowed to introduce a more ſimple and equitable one, ſhowing a better inſight into the true ſources of wealth and the real ſprings of induſtry. The employments of civil ſociety were every where freed from a number of burdenſome conſtraints; and the beneficial principle of general competition ſupplanted a pernicious monopoly, looked upon, in the infancy of ſociety, as the only encouragement and reward of activity. Excluſive privileges were diminiſhed; inequalities ſoftened down; and the advantages of individuals made ſubordinate to the good of the whole. The edu-

cation of youth began every where to be attended to as a great national concern; to become an object of the care and protection of government; and, by the adoption of more effectual methods, to be brought nearer to the ſphere of practical life.

I am far from intending to aſſert, that this happy progreſs of ſociety was any where as perfect and conſiſtent as I have here deſcribed it. There were ſtill many dark and uncouth parts in the great picture of the age, from which the obſerver turned away with ſorrow or diſguſt. There ſtill appeared frequent traces of barbariſm in the manners, laws, and governments of the moſt poliſhed nations. The abilities and characters of the men in power, were not always proportioned to the degree of maturity and refinement which their ſubjects had attained, or to which their hopes and endeavours were directed. The impediments likewiſe ariſing from particular circumſtances and local relations, which oppoſed the execution of beneficial plans, muſt naturally have been more frequent and conſiderable in ſome countries than in others: but the general tendency of all nations and all governments was directed to a progreſſive, perſevering, and ſyſtematic improvement of the ſtate of mankind, more than in any other period of ancient or modern hiſtory. The good actually accompliſhed,

was

was not brought about, as in former, even the brighteſt and happieſt periods of antiquity, by irregular, partial, inſulated, and tranſient meaſures; but with order, conſiſtency, and method; principles clearly underſtood; having a great and laſting object in view; and comprehending the intereſts of all mankind.

The moſt important of the cauſes that prepared the dreadful ſtorms which cloſed the eighteenth century, will be found in this tendency to a general and always progreſſive reform, which conſtitutes the prominent and diſtinguiſhing feature of the ſocial and political character of the age, eſpecially in the laſt twenty years before the revolution. The elements of the deſolating tempeſt were foſtered, as in the natural world, in the ſame fertilizing atmoſphere that gave a rich and wholeſome nouriſhment, a rapid and luxuriant growth, to the nobleſt plants in the ſoil of ſociety. The new opinions of the governed combined with the altered diſpoſitions of the governors, to bring on this dreadful phenomenon. On the one hand, the conſciouſneſs of a higher degree of happineſs and freedom, of increaſed ſtrength, and of greater individual importance, produced a number of wiſhes, deſires, and pretenſions, hitherto unknown: with the increaſe of wealth aroſe diſcontent; with freedom, arrogance;

with the progreſs of knowledge, the propenſity to idle and extravagant ſpeculations: a ſpirit of diſorder, of uneaſineſs, and cenſoriouſneſs, was the prevailing temper of all the leading ſtates of Europe. On the other hand, thoſe inveſted with power, were not always ſufficiently cautious and circumſpect in the reforms and alterations they wiſhed to make. They were too haſty in the execution of their plans; they ſtrained the ſprings of power till they riſked their breaking; they irritated the minds of their ſubjects by raſh and violent meaſures; they increaſed the dangerous fermentation of the times, inſtead of uſing every endeavour to appeaſe it; they often gave ear to raſh, enthuſiaſtic, and even ſuſpicious counſellors, who, under the ſeductive pretext of the general good, and of immortal fame, led them by untimely, ill-combined, chimerical projects, into a labyrinth of errors and troubles, and brought them to the brink of ruin.

It may with truth be aſſerted, that ſo far as any cauſes of the revolutions we have ſeen, may be aſcribed to the condition of civil ſociety, they will be found in that very propenſity to improvement, that very progreſs towards perfection, which was the pride and merit of the laſt century. Our greatneſs occaſioned our fall; our

inſatiable

inſatiable deſire of advancing was the cauſe of our enervation; our meritorious ambition led to our preſent humiliation. That there no longer exiſted any maxims of government, any principles of politics in Europe, was not the root of the evil; no, it was the abuſe of thoſe maxims and principles in meaſures too confident, too raſh and enterpriſing, in reforms too ſudden and too general at once, in attempts to riſe from the ſafer paths of experience into regions yet untried of ſpeculative politics. It was preſumption, not indolence; enthuſiaſm, not averſion to reform; that involved Europe in all the misfortunes it has ſince experienced; and led to a total diſorganization, then and then only, when the real authors of thoſe calamities received from the accidental errors of a feeble government, the ſignal for a general ſubverſion.

This haſty ſketch of the internal ſtate of Europe before the revolution, is drawn with more truth than that which the Author has preſented us. Every attentive obſerver of the progreſs and condition of mankind, in the laſt twenty years preceding that event, will admit the juſtice of it. But, leaving this general reaſoning, we muſt now take a haſty view of the map of Europe; and conſider briefly, the internal ſtate of each of its component parts during

during that period; in order to ſhow, by hiſtorical facts, that no nation was excluded from this bright career of amelioration and advancement; and that the ſame ſpirit, the ſame propenſity, were every where awakened and manifeſted, though not always in the ſame manner and degree.

Russia experienced its ſecond political and moral regeneration, under the ſceptre of an extraordinary woman. The thirty-four years reign of the Empreſs Catherine, was an almoſt uninterrupted ſeries of great and important reforms in the internal ſtate of her immenſe empire. It requires no extraordinary talents, no extraordinary pains, to diſcover many unfavourable parts in objects of ſuch ſtupendous magnitude as that empire and government; and, like many modern writers, wholly regardleſs of the true point of view, to repreſent, even now, in the darkeſt colours, and perhaps to turn into ridicule, a nation which a hundred years ago was buried in the deepeſt barbariſm; but every candid judge, if he be capable of diſtinguiſhing how much was attainable, and what means there exiſted of attaining it, will confeſs that the ſtate of Ruſſia, from 1780 to 1790, compared with the condition of that empire at the deceaſe of Peter the Great,

Great, preſents a difference truly aſtoniſhing. The new ſyſtem of legiſlation of the Empreſs, her wiſe and humane regulations of police, her endeavours to promote induſtry, her new arrangement of the Ruſſian dominions, her meaſures for enſuring the public ſafety, the education, the improvement, and the health of her ſubjects; the hoſpitals of different kinds which ſhe eſtabliſhed for the reception of the ſick and poor; the unwearied zeal which ſhe diſplayed in the ſervice of the arts and ſciences; the liberality of opinion, the taſte, and refinement in the habits of ſocial intercourſe diffuſed around her throne by the influence of her own accompliſhed mind:—theſe are not ſymptoms of a government without energy or principles; are not indications of the decay and fall of nations. Even thoſe reſtleſs projects of aggrandizement, which rendered the government of Catherine ſo dangerous to the repoſe of Europe, aroſe in a great meaſure (though not indeed altogether) from endeavours to carry her work to a degree of perfection, for which the time was not yet arrived. She attempted to ſuperſede the neceſſity of a ſlow and gradual civilization of her immenſe empire, by bolder meaſures; ſhe wanted to become a European power in the utmoſt extent of the word, and in the ſhorteſt way; her plans were greater than her means; ſhe endeavoured

voured to redouble thoſe means, that ſhe might accompliſh, in a few years, what would, perhaps, in the common courſe of things, require a century. The reigning character of the age appeared even in her ambition.

The AUSTRIAN monarchy, under the government of Joſeph II. preſented the remarkable ſpectacle of a ſevere and obſtinate conteſt between a monarch inſpired even to enthuſiaſm with the ſpirit of reform, and nations who rewarded his philanthropic zeal with ingratitude and reſiſtance. The idea of an uniform ſyſtem of legiſlation, of one common adminiſtration, for a ſtate compoſed of ſo many heterogeneous parts, was indeed more like a philoſophic dream, than a rational and practicable ſyſtem of government. But, however blameable, this evidently proceeded from an exceſs of praiſeworthy intentions, and was no ſign of indifference to good. Thoſe men whoſe intereſts were connected with the maintenance of ancient abuſes, cried down the ſyſtem of the Emperor; but all enlightened perſons admired it. Poſterity, more juſt, will at all events admire him. Many errors and much harm reſulted from the haſtineſs of his conduct, which ſometimes degenerated into violence and ſeverity. Many of the complaints of his ſubjects were well founded;

he more than once ſacrificed to his ſpeculative ideas of reform, the reſpect due to exiſting rights and conſecrated prejudices, which frequently border on the moſt ſolid truths, and hold by the moſt reſpectable feelings. But his undertakings were often marked with the ſtamp of true wiſdom, and ſometimes produced noble and laſting fruit. His name has been glorioufly immortalized by many very important reforms in the religious, legiſlative, and domeſtic condition of his dominions, by many excellent eſtabliſhments for public education, for the internal police, for the ſupport and care of the poor and ſick, and for the improvement of induſtry in the ſtates he governed. It is a very remarkable circumſtance, that all diſturbances which aroſe in different parts of this monarchy, and eſpecially the ſerious events in Hungary and the Netherlands, were excited by the too haſty execution of his benevolent intentions, by the impetuoſity of a mind too ardent in the purſuit of the nobleſt objects of humanity, by the boldneſs of his projects of reform. If fate had permitted his ſucceſſor, whoſe mild and peaceable diſpoſition appeaſed every diſturbance, and won the hearts of men at the very beginning of his reign, to finiſh the work undertaken by his brother; if he who exalted Tuſcany to be the ſeat of true political wiſdom, had been allowed to

tranſport

tranſport his excellent adminiſtration to a more extenſive theatre; if no French revolution had arreſted the progreſs of improvement, and blaſted the bloſſoms of ſo many hopes, what might not the Auſtrian monarchy, under the government of Leopold and his ſucceſſor, have attained to?

The achievements of Frederick II. have been too much the objects of general obſervation, too often the ſubject of the moſt admired authors, not to render it unneceſſary for me to dwell much upon them in this place. The world, afflicted and almoſt exhauſted with continued wars, beheld the military talents of this extraordinary genius with diſmay. It was his good fortune, by the ſervice he rendered during twenty-three years of peace, to efface that impreſſion. In that ever memorable period the kingdom of PRUSSIA became a noble example of order, regularity, and energy; of fruitful induſtry, admirable cultivation, and true civil liberty *: nor was the edifying example of this kingdom unproductive of good effects to others. More than one of the German princes imitated the ſyſtem of government adopted by Frederick. Germany, in general, made remarkable

* Vide Note E.

advances

advances in every branch of public welfare, between the end of the ſeven years war, and the beginning of the French revolution. With the exception of a few ſtates, kept back by the difficulties of a general reform, or by the indolence of their rulers, the improvements in adminiſtration, held up by Pruſſia in the north, and by Auſtria in the ſouth, to the imitation of their neighbours, were every where viſible in their effects. It is only neceſſary to advert to the proſperous ſtate of Saxony, Brunſwick, Hanover *, Holſtein, Heſſe, Baden, and many of the ſmaller principalities, and even ſome of the eccleſiaſtical ſtates, during the laſt years of that period.

The ſlighteſt glance at the affairs of the BRITISH EMPIRE, is ſufficient to baniſh every idea of decay and diſorganization. The condition of that kingdom after the American war, was the firſt complete demonſtration of the true principles of the wealth of nations, which had remained ſo long unknown. The loſs of her colonies was the firſt æra of the laſting and independent greatneſs of Britain. It was after the

* The adminiſtration of this country has always been exemplary, and has implicitly followed the Pruſſian model, even in its military eſtabliſhment.—TRANS.

year

year 1783 that ſhe became conſcious of her real ſtrength, and clearly underſtood the true grounds upon which it reſted. Until then ſhe had more or leſs partaken of the errors and miſconduct of the reſt of Europe, derived from an imperfect knowledge of the ſyſtem of commerce. She now took the lead of all, in a new career, and upon better principles. The French revolution, which interrupted the progreſs of all Europe, undoubtedly confined and retarded the completion of the maſterly ſyſtem of adminiſtration adopted in England. It is a phenomenon ſufficiently extraordinary, which can only be explained by the hiſtory of its government during the preceding ten years, that Great Britain ſhould have been able to maintain itſelf entire and unſhaken in the dreadful war excited by that revolution*. What it might have attained to in a continuance of peace, muſt be a matter of mere hypotheſis; but this hypotheſis will receive a place among the cleareſt political truths from thoſe who have been accuſtomed to ſtudy the true ſources of the proſperity and ſtrength of nations.

* I mean to examine, and I hope completely to refute the opinion, that England has proſpered *by* this war, in a ſubſequent chapter.

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The government of DENMARK in the ſame period was characterized by meaſures which, though leſs ſplendid, were certainly not leſs praiſeworthy in their nature. It united, by a policy equally wiſe and liberal, the two extremes of all miniſterial wiſdom. It increaſed the revenue of the ſtate, while it enriched its ſubjects: it confirmed its own power, while it gratified a juſt and reaſonable love of liberty. The abolition of the laſt traces of villanage, the improved cultivation of the country, the wiſe laws enacted for fixing the relations between the peaſantry and the proprietors of land, the liberty of the preſs, the harmony which reigned between the different orders of the ſtate, the reciprocal confidence between the people and the throne: all theſe internal improvements form one of the moſt pleaſing pictures which the page of hiſtory will have to hand down to poſterity.

Though ſcantily endowed by nature, exhauſted by the extravagant undertakings of her moſt celebrated princes, and fallen into decay during the deſtructive anarchy which immediately followed her unnatural greatneſs; even SWEDEN, under the reign of Guſtavus III. made evident progreſs towards a ſtate of greater proſperity and ſtability. The reſtleſs mind of that prince embraced every branch of the public

welfare; introduced light, order, and activity into the chaos of a diſordered government; and in the midſt of many dangers and adverſities, laid the foundations of a new one, upon which his ſucceſſors, under more favourable circumſtances, may completely organize a better ſyſtem. The accounts which Guſtavus, from time to time, laid before the diet, are noble proofs of his vigilance, induſtry, and acuteneſs; and though his paſſions ſometimes counteracted the good which was the object of his zeal, though the ſpirit of party ran very high during his life, and the political ſituation of his country was often very critical; yet the benefit he conferred upon Sweden will long continue to be felt, and will be fully acknowledged by the judgment of an impartial poſterity.

It may, perhaps, at the firſt glance, look ſomewhat like temerity, to mention the unfortunate kingdom of POLAND, in an account of the progreſs and improvement of the different ſtates of Europe. But even in this retarded and neglected country, the dawn of a brighter day had begun, ſhortly before its diſſolution, to enlighten the horizon. No eſſential improvement was in this inſtance practicable without a thorough reform of the conſtitution; for the errors in the conſtitution were the real cauſes of

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the decay and weakneſs of the ſtate. This firſt object had, however, already occupied the attention of all thinking perſons; and the partition of 1772, with all its evil conſequences, had one beneficial effect for Poland; it pointed out, in the cleareſt and moſt impreſſive manner, the neceſſity of a great political regeneration. The patriotic zeal of the friends of a radical reform, and the general conviction of its neceſſity, firſt brought it forward as an object of public conſideration, at the diet in 1788. The reſult of this diet is well known: the conſtitution of 1791 was the preſage of a happier fortune, the beginning of a new ſtate of exiſtence, conformable to the ſpirit of the times, and the progreſs of civilization in the reſt of Europe. This is not the place to review the ſeries of events, by which this conſtitution was deſtroyed in the moment of its birth, and Poland for ever ſtruck out of the liſt of nations. But there is one obſervation which applies immediately to my argument, and will be ſubſcribed to without difficulty by every impartial reader acquainted with the hiſtory of modern times: had it not been for the French revolution, the conſtitution of 1791 would not have been deſtroyed, nor the political independence of Poland annihilated.

Of all the nations of Europe, SPAIN and PORTUGAL were perhaps the farthest behind in the general ſtate of improvement. And yet the irreſiſtible ſtrength of that propenſity to reform, which actuated the moſt indolent governments, was not altogether without effect even in theſe. Portugal had been awakened from her profound ſlumber by the adminiſtration of Pombal; another miniſter like him, one prince only of an active diſpoſition, would have freed her altogether from the fetters that encumbered her. Spain too began to underſtand her true intereſts; and, however great the difficulties ſhe had to ſurmount, the reſolution of encountering them was not wanting*. Much time, and many favourable circumſtances, were requiſite to ameliorate the condition of a nation, whoſe decay was the reſult of cauſes ſo ancient and ſo deeply rooted; but it is enough that the deſire of reformation was awakened, and a reſolution taken to effect it. We are not, at preſent, aſſerting the uniformity of the reſult, but the generality and uniformity of the impulſe and exertions.

Even ITALY, ſo far behind all other civilized nations, in proportion to her natural ſtrength and

* Bourgoing's inſtructive work on Spain ſufficiently ſhows that the Spaniſh government was not inactive or ſupine in the above period, though it had almoſt inſurmountable difficulties to encounter.

advantages

advantages which ſeemed to have deſtined her to a place among the firſt; even Italy had made ſome advances towards an improved ſtate. The Grand Dutchy of Tuſcany, transformed into a paradiſe by Leopold, afforded a ſurpriſing example to the world of what may be accompliſhed in the ſhort ſpace of twenty years, by a prince endowed with wiſdom, activity, and perſeverance. This example could not poſſibly remain entirely uſeleſs to the neighbouring ſtates: even the feeble government of Rome conceived the thought of rendering itſelf independent of contributions from abroad, by adopting principles of prudence and economy; and the meaſures of Cardinal Ruffo during the time he managed the finances of the Pope, were all founded upon that idea. Naples, a country fallen into the deepeſt decay, by the total neglect of every principle of government, oppreſſed with barbarous abuſes; and having ſuch a conſtitution as rendered it almoſt impoſſible for the government to undertake any good work; Naples began to liſten to prudent counſels, employed the wiſeſt heads to project plans of a ſyſtematic reform, and was preparing to put them in execution *. She would, doubtleſs, have had to encounter the greateſt difficulties in accompliſhing this; but it would have been undertaken; and no one can with cer-

* Vide Note F.

tainty aſſert, that the attempt would have been unſucceſsful, had not the ſtorm of the revolution here, as every where elſe, deſtroyed good and bad together, and renewed the chaos, out of which a happier order of things was beginning to unfold itſelf to our hopes.

In order to complete this review of the ſtates of Europe, we muſt, in the laſt place, direct our attention to the central point of the revolution; the country out of which its ſplendid promiſes, and its dreadful devaſtations, have immediately proceeded. That the former government of FRANCE was ſuch as ſtood in need of the greateſt reforms; that the errors in its legiſlation, its adminiſtration, and its domeſtic conſtitution, were many and great, cannot for a moment be diſputed. Nobody will attempt to deny that the government of Lewis the XVth laid the foundation of a dangerous diſorganization. But was the reign of LEWIS XVI. from its commencement to its tragical end, a proof of the aſſertion, that there no longer exiſted any proper principles of government in Europe? Was it not rather marked throughout by the deſire of beneficial reforms, the prevailing character of the times? Was not its only misfortune a miſconception of its ſtrength, which ſank under the weight of its own undertakings?

Was the monarch who placed TURGOT and MALESHERBES among the number of his miniſters, who twice intruſted the fate of his kingdom to the hands of NECKER, was he a patron of abuſes, a blind follower of former ſyſtems? Was the *convocation of the* NOTABLES, and the plan for which they were convened, the work of mean, contemptible, obſcure, and common-place politics? Was the facility, or rather the levity with which this government conſented to the aſſembling of the States, a proof of tenacious obſtinacy, or of an imprudent ſpirit of conceſſion? Was the edict of the 5th July 1788, which not only eſtabliſhed the freedom of the preſs, but called upon every hand that could guide a pen to employ itſelf in publiſhing plans of general utility—was that edict the meaſure of a court that trembled at every proſpect of innovation? Was the decree of the council of ſtate of the 27th December 1788, and the ſpeech of the miniſter of finance of the 5th May 1789, and even the unfortunate declaration of the 23d May—were theſe the productions of a government far behind the wiſhes and opinions of its enlightened ſubjects? Is the revolution, in ſhort, to be attributed to the want of ſyſtem and principles; or, on the contrary, to the ſuperfluity and abuſe of them?

Theſe are queſtions which require no anſwers. In France, as in the reſt of Europe, "that general character of impatience, reſtleſſneſs, and mutability," which the Author with juſtice deſcribes as the diſtinguiſhing feature of the age, was only the neceſſary conſequence, the expreſſion, as it were, of a general ſenſe of the progreſs already made, and the deſire of further improvement. The events of the laſt ten years were occaſioned by the too ardent and too haſty purſuit of good intentions, not by the general prevalence of corruption; and inſtead of admitting, that the true principles of adminiſtration were never ſo ill underſtood, we may, on the contrary, aſſert with confidence, that they were never ſo generally and extenſively known and practiſed in any period of hiſtory; that the condition of mankind had never required ſo little as it then did, the violent revolution which France experienced, and of which all Europe has felt the effects; and that this revolution, inſtead of being the laſt link of a long chain of diſorganization and decay, was, on the contrary, the firſt link of a new chain of misfortune and diſorder; the ſignal for a general pauſe, perhaps relapſe in the ſtate of Europe, by a daring attempt to leave the natural cauſe of ſocial improvement, and to bring it at once to perfection.

Such

Such was the ſtate of Europe with reſpect to the internal condition of its ſeveral nations. Let us now proceed to examine, whether, in their political relations towards each other, there is any better foundation for the belief of that general diſorganization and total want of *public law*, which are ſaid to have exiſted at the time of the French revolution.

That this examination may not degenerate into empty ſpeculation, we muſt, in the firſt place, define with preciſion, the meaning to be properly attached to the term, *public law*, or law of nations *(droit public)*.

A law of nations, in the moſt extenſive ſenſe of the word, would be ſuch a conſtitution as ſhould eſtabliſh all their ſeveral relations by immutable laws; aſſign to each the place it ought to hold in the general ſyſtem, ſo as not to interfere with the intereſts of the reſt; guarantee the duration of this ſyſtem by a perfect equilibrium of power, and provide effectual means for preventing every undertaking of a nature to deſtroy that equilibrium. Such a conſtitution can only exiſt in idea, never in reality. There never has been any law of nations in this ſenſe of the word; and it would be in vain to expect it, until the project of perpetual peace be likewiſe realized.

To convince ourſelves that the federal conſtitution of nations can never be otherwiſe than imperfect, we need only conſider the imperfection of all ſyſtems invented and eſtabliſhed by man; the immenſity of the objects to be embraced by a code of laws, comprehending and regulating the rights of all nations; the impenetrability of the future; the mutability of the relations of ſociety; and the alterations that muſt neceſſarily take place in the courſe of time, in the abſolute and relative ſtrength of different ſtates, owing to the diverſity of their fortunes, the inequality of their progreſs, or the perſonal abilities of their princes. The merits of ſuch a conſtitution muſt always be merely relative, greater or leſs; and the moſt perfect federal ſyſtem we can ever hope for, will at beſt only be tolerable.

Whoever takes upon him to aſſert, that, at a certain period, the political ſyſtem was utterly corrupted, and the federal conſtitution either eminently defective or totally annihilated, muſt be able to ſhow, that at that period there exiſted no guaranty of public ſecurity; that the balance of power was entirely deſtroyed; that the weaker ſtates could no longer find refuge or protection againſt the uſurpations of the ſtronger; that one or a few of the powerful endangered the peace and ſecurity of the reſt, and rendered

rendered their exiſtence precarious; that the diſputes of nations were no longer determinable by negotiations or treaties; and that war and force were the only reſource, the only policy, the only umpire in all their differences.

Was this the ſtate of the federative ſyſtem of Europe at the commencement of the French revolution? I ſhould contradict my own opinion were I to heſitate a moment to confeſs, that at that time the political ſyſtem laboured under great defects, and was pervaded by many errors; that it was far, very far, removed from that perfect federal conſtitution, which we contemplate in idea; that the balance between the principal powers was by no means ſecured; and that the ſituation of the ſmaller ſtates was in many reſpects dangerous and precarious. A great part of theſe errors and defects was the immediate conſequence of the rapid civilization of Europe, by which the former proportions between the leading ſtates were altered, and the diſproportion between four or five preponderant nations on the one hand, and a great number of ſmall, diſperſed, and inſignificant ſtates on the other, was conſiderably augmented. This diſproportion excited and encouraged many and various plans of ambition and uſurpation; and at length added to the numberleſs combinations of modern politics, the

the celebrated ſyſtem of partition, which inflicted ſo deep and dangerous a wound on the federal conſtitution *.

But I can never be perſuaded to believe that " at the time of the French revolution, the political ſyſtem of Europe had reached the laſt ſtage of decay and diſorganization; that its every prop and foundation was deſtroyed;" and that " it preſented nothing but imbecility, anarchy, and confuſion." The hiſtory of the twenty-five years which elapſed between the peace of Hubertſburg and Fontainebleau, and the beginning of the diſturbances in France, contradicts this aſſertion in every reſpect; the moſt indiſputable facts ſtand in oppoſition to it; the ſlighteſt glance at the ſituation of Europe, during that period, confirms the very reverſe. The federal conſtitution was at leaſt as perfect as it ever had been ſince the thirty years war; nay, it was even more efficient and entire. The changes which Europe had experienced in the laſt 150 years had been as happily and wiſely grafted on the former political relations, as, from the joint operation of accident and prudence (ſuch is the nature of every federative ſyſtem), could ever have been deſired or expected; the balance of power was adjuſted as effectually and as favourably as a li-

* Vide Note G.

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beral and reaſonable policy could deſire; and if there were ſome events which infringed the ſacred principles of the federal conſtitution, they were at leaſt avenged by the unanimous indignation, and the marked diſapprobation of all cotemporaries. Europe poſſeſſed, in every reaſonable ſenſe of the word, a federative conſtitution, a political balance, and a law of nations.

To explain theſe truths, it will not be neceſſary to deſcend to a minute and particular analyſis of the political relations exiſting at that period. It is ſufficient if we dwell upon the leading features of the picture. The fate of Europe depends upon the fortunes and political relations of the powers which preponderate in the general ſyſtem. If the balance be preſerved among theſe; if their political exiſtence and internal organization be ſafely eſtabliſhed; if, by their mutual action and reaction, they protect and ſecure the independence of the ſmaller ſtates (ſo much, at leaſt, as the weak can be ſecure in a community with the ſtrong); if there is no dangerous preponderance to be perceived, which threatens to oppreſs the reſt, or to involve them in endleſs war; we may reſt ſatisfied with the federal conſtitution which fulfils theſe moſt eſſential points, notwithſtanding many errors and defects. And ſuch was the federal conſtitution of Europe before the French revolution.

The

The five powers which ſince the middle of the eighteenth century have conſtituted the principal weight in the general political ſyſtem are, France, Auſtria, Pruſſia, Ruſſia, and England. In conſidering the federal relations of theſe ſtates, we ſhall have an opportunity of adverting to thoſe of a ſecond and third order, as well as to ſome of a ſtill lower rank, ſo far at leaſt as they affect the general ſurvey of Europe.

FRANCE.

The external relations of a nation are agreeable to the true principles of the federal conſtitution, when it is completely, or in a very great degree, ſecured againſt every foreign aggreſſion, by its natural poſition, or its internal ſtrength and means of defence, or its political connexions, or all of theſe combined. A large, and by its nature preponderant ſtate, muſt, moreover, poſſeſs a certain degree of influence on the reſt, and on the political relations of Europe, to enable it to maintain its due place in the general ſyſtem.

The latter of theſe requiſites is, however, leſs eſſential than the firſt; the principle upon which it is founded, is leſs defined, and therefore more liable to be abuſed by being carried to an undue and dangerous extent. The vague and equivo-

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cal terms *influence*, *conſideration*, *credit*, &c. are too often made the cloak of ambitious, reſtleſs, intriguing politics, which ſacrifice the welfare of all nations, and even their own intereſts, to a chimera of imaginary ſuperiority. But in this a proper medium is to be obſerved. No power in Europe, and more eſpecially none of the leading powers, can or ought to be without a conſtant influence over the reſt. Were it to be entirely confined within itſelf, and its intereſts altogether diſtinct, it would be in continual danger of ſeeing its intereſts and independence fall a ſacrifice to dexterous combinations. It would degenerate into an idle, and ſoon contemptible ſpectator of the changes conſtantly happening in the relations of other ſtates; it would either endanger its own ſecurity, the firſt and principal object of all federative policy, or be often obliged to defend in ſanguinary wars, what might have been more eaſily and advantageouſly maintained by timely vigilance, by prudent negotiation, or even by that reſpect alone, which it might have exacted from its neighbours.

Let us now conſider the political ſituation of France before the revolution, in both theſe points of view.

The

The ſecurity of that nation againſt every attack from without, was founded partly on the internal means of defence peculiar to it, and partly on the nature of its political relations to all its neighbours.

The military and geographical ſituation of France was more proper to enſure the permanent ſecurity of an extenſive kingdom, than any other that can be conceived; the moſt advantageous that any nation in Europe could boaſt of; the moſt excellent that has ever exiſted in the ſphere of the modern political ſyſtem. The greater part of it was bounded by the ſea; and its continental frontiers were ſo protected by art or nature, in every point, as to render them almoſt impenetrable to an enemy. On the ſide of Spain, and on that of Savoy, it was defended by the higheſt mountains in Europe; and ſuch was the diſproportion of its ſtrength, to that of the nations beyond thoſe mountains, ſo evident was the impoſſibility of penetrating into the interior of France by way of the Alps or Pyrenees, that any danger of an invaſion on that ſide muſt be totally out of the queſtion. The eaſtern, and ſtill more a part of its northern confines, were leſs protected by nature; and being contiguous to more powerful nations, were more expoſed to an attack. But here a chain of fortified places unparalleled

ralleled in its kind, and admirably combined with the natural means of defence, preſented an impenetrable bulwark, ſufficient to deter the moſt enterpriſing enemy. The martial ſpirit, the induſtry, and riches of the nation; their attainments in the arts and ſciences; completed and crowned the abundance of natural and artificial means of defence. Experience had ſufficiently proved that nothing was wanting to render them complete; and the hope of conquering France had long ſince been baniſhed as an empty viſion*.

To theſe peculiar advantages that aſſured the ſafety of France, were added (particularly in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and in that period when the federal conſtitution is ſaid to have been at its laſt gaſp) all thoſe which federative policy can combine, to give to a nation the higheſt poſſible degree of ſecurity. No power on the continent could, with any appearance of hope or reaſon, conceive the project of invading France: they muſt all have been reſtrained either by the evident impoſſibility of ſucceſs, or by the ſlighteſt knowledge of their own intereſts. The diſtance of Ruſſia, and the policy of the intermediate ſtates, precluded any attack from that quarter. A balance of power had been formed in Germany by the elevation of Pruſ-

* Vide Note H.

ſia, from which France could not but derive the moſt eſſential advantage in all poſſible political combinations. If Auſtria had attempted to aggrandize herſelf, Pruſſia would have been ready to oppoſe her ; if Pruſſia had threatened France with hoſtility, the aſſiſtance of Auſtria was at hand. That power, moreover, which in the German empire had moſt frequently waged war with France; from which ſhe had the greateſt reaſon to expect an attack ; and whoſe ſituation, above all others, gave her the means of making it ; that very power had, during an uninterrupted period of thirty years, maintained an alliance with her. She was united to Spain, on the other hand, by the cloſeſt bonds of amity. The King of Sardinia was the natural ally of France on account of his political ſituation, his dread of the power of Auſtria, and his deſire of aggrandizing himſelf in Italy ; even though the many family connexions which united them, were to be conſidered as nothing. Switzerland, in all her alliances, had given a decided preference to the kings of France, and cultivated their friendſhip above any other. We may boldly aſſert that there was not a ſingle ſtate on the continent of Europe, which, in the ſituation of affairs at that time, was not impelled by the ſtrongeſt motives, by ſome great and important intereſt, to ſeek the favour and friendſhip of France. Every archive,

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every article of diplomatic correſpondence, and every ſtate paper of all the cabinets of Europe, from the time of Cardinal Fleury, to the year 1789, might be ſubmitted to the penetrating eye of the moſt expert politician, without his being able to diſcover in them the ſlighteſt trace of a conſpiracy againſt the intereſts of France, or any plan inimical to the ſecurity and independence of that kingdom.

There was only one among the greater powers whoſe intereſts were contrary to thoſe of France, and who at the ſame time poſſeſſed the means of injuring her; and that was England. Some ſtriking contrarieties in their national characters, centuries of warfare, and a long rivalry in the moſt important objects of true or imaginary national greatneſs, had abundantly ſown the ſeeds of hatred and contention between theſe two nations, at once ſo near, and ſo completely ſeparated. The ſentiment of offended pride continued to irritate a wound never healed. England alone had, properly ſpeaking, triumphed over France, in the courſe of the whole century, and ſhe had, in ſome inſtances, obliged her to ſubmit to mortifying humiliations. So numerous, moreover, were the points of contact between them; ſo many the objects common to the activity and ambition of both; ſo frequent the colliſion of their

reſpective intereſts, that a ſtate of perfect peace between them could not be of long duration.

But, with reſpect to the danger reſulting to France from this hoſtile relation, it appears that the true foundation of all political independence and greatneſs, the ſecurity and integrity of its territory, was not invaded or materially endangered in any war with England. Colonial and commercial intereſts, the conſtant objects of contention between them, though certainly great and important, were only ſecondary to the above conſideration ; and the danger that enſued, though ſerious and afflicting, was only ſubordinate. The true foundation of the power of France remained unſhaken and unhurt, amidſt the greateſt misfortunes which befel her commerce, her navy, and her poſſeſſions in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies. We have, therefore, often ſeen her riſe quickly from the ſevereſt blows received from England, and reclaim with ſucceſsful energy what ſhe had for a moment been deprived of.

The hiſtory of the naval wars of the eighteenth century proves, beſides, that the balance of power between France and England was by no means uniformly on the ſame ſide. The war which finiſhed in the year 1762, was the moſt unfortunate of all for France: the peace of Fontainebleau

bleau was the epoch of her deepeſt humiliation. But how was the ſituation of the two rivals altered in the ſhort ſpace of twenty years, when the French navy roſe with new ſplendour from its ruins; when the empire of the ſeas was diſputed with various ſucceſs by France and England; when victory more than once ſettled upon the French; and when theſe ſucceeded, againſt all expectation, in wreſting the moſt important colonies in the world, out of the hands of their adverſaries! It is evident, therefore, that the power of Great Britain did preſent no ſuch preponderance before the revolution, as to be a conſtant ſubject of dread and alarm to France. The ſecurity of her territory, the principal object in the relations of a ſtate with its neighbours, was never ſeriouſly endangered by England, however formidable; and in the proper ſphere of their rivalry, their commerce, colonial intereſts, and naval power, the advantage was almoſt as often on the ſide of France as on that of England. To this muſt be added, that, in the year 1786, the firſt formal treaty of commerce was concluded between the two rival ſtates, and the idea of an eternal enmity between them was gradually dying away. Since the commencement of the eighteenth century, there was no period in which the probability of a laſting peace between France and England was ſo great; in which the danger

of the renewal of the war was ſo remote, ſo little to be dreaded, as at the moment when the French revolution broke out.

Such was the ſituation of France with reſpect to her *ſecurity:* let us now conſider what *political influence* ſhe enjoyed.

The influence of the cabinet of Verſailles upon the affairs and fortunes of Europe, had attained its meridian in the ſplendid days of Lewis XIV. It declined after the peace of Ryſſwick; the war for the Spaniſh ſucceſſion had remarkably diminiſhed it; and though it afterwards roſe in ſome degree, yet it never regained the extent and greatneſs it poſſeſſed in more early periods. This was partly, indeed, occaſioned by changes in the relative ſtrength of the European powers; but ſtill more, and in one ſenſe excluſively, by the perſonal character of the prince who aſcended the throne after Lewis XIV. Had ſuch changes not happened in the ſtate of Europe, ſtill the influence of France muſt have been conſiderably leſs, under the government of a peaceable and moderate, or, ſtill more, of a weak and indolent monarch, than under the ſceptre of a warlike, ambitious, active, and enterpriſing prince. Such is the inevitable deſtiny of all earthly greatneſs and dominion! The brevity of human life forbids the

the works of man to be eternal. The inheritance of an Alexander, a Cæſar, a Gengis Khan, a Guſtavus Adolphus, have all of them undergone revolutions much greater than thoſe of Lewis XIV. in the hands of his deſcendants.

But to determine upon principles of truth and juſtice, how far France experienced a real misfortune, and a cauſe of juſt complaint, in the diminution of her influence in the general ſyſtem under Lewis XV. we muſt in the firſt place examine and determine what ſhould be the proper meaſure of that influence; the extent to which it ought, upon grounds of equity and general utility, to be carried. Wherever we fix the limit of the extent we aſſign to it, it is clear and undeniable that Lewis XIV. had gone beyond it. His arbitrary and unjuſt pretenſions, the haughtineſs with which he announced them, the terror he ſpread among his neighbours, the general miſtruſt prevailing in Europe, the alliances and coalitions ſo often formed and renewed, as the only recourſe againſt his plans; all theſe things ſufficiently ſhow, that his views were incompatible with the peace and ſafety of the reſt, and in direct oppoſition to the laws of the federal conſtitution. The exhauſted ſtate in which he left his kingdom proved ſtill more: it proved that he had exceeded his ſtrength; that he had ſacrificed the

true intereſts of his country to a chimera of greatneſs, dominion, and fame; that he had been in purſuit of objects, in which a more enlightened policy would have diſcovered no real advantage even to France. It was no misfortune for the world, it was for the happineſs of France, that his ſucceſſors renounced his coloſſal projects, his extravagant efforts, his reſtleſs interference in all the affairs of Europe. The dignity of a nation is not lowered, nor its real importance diminiſhed, by renouncing undue pretenſions to inordinate influence. It often becomes ſtronger in reality by what it loſes in appearance. France made more important advances in every branch of public welfare, under the peaceful adminiſtration of Cardinal Fleury, than in the moſt brilliant times of Lewis XIV.

It is true that the exceſſive forbearance of the French miniſtry under Lewis XV. often degenerated, particularly in the latter part of his reign, into dangerous careleſſneſs, and ſometimes into total apathy; and France permitted undertakings which it could and ought to have oppoſed. But it muſt not be ſaid, that her influence, becauſe neglected during this period of relaxation, was therefore annihilated. The elements of that influence exiſted as formerly; a more energetic government would ſoon have re-eſtabliſhed it.

The part acted by France under Lewis XVI. particularly from the beginning of the American war, to the commencement of her internal diſſenſions, reſembled in nothing the conduct of a nation "ſunk into contempt and inſignificancy, deprived of its former character, and almoſt forgotten in Europe." This proved that France ſtill poſſeſſed all that a nation of the firſt rank ought to poſſeſs and deſire to preſerve; that ſhe ſtill held the rank that belonged to her in the political ſyſtem, on account of her internal ſtrength and her external relations; and that of the changes in Europe, which had in the mean time taken place, there were none of a nature to diminiſh her legitimate influence. An impartial ſurvey of her political ſituation at that time, will confirm theſe truths, and ſupport them againſt all the ſophiſtical declamations of diſcontent, or the ungrateful diſregard of former advantages.

The relations between France and GERMANY ſince the middle of the eighteenth century, had been as favourable to the intereſts of France, as the moſt ingenious federal policy could have contrived to make them. Pruſſia, from the moment of her elevation, became a counterpoiſe to the Houſe of Auſtria, incomparably more uſeful to France than that ſhe was formerly obliged to create by uncertain and imperfect alliances with the

the members of the Empire. From that time, France, in every poſſible conjuncture, had the choice of two allies, almoſt equally powerful; ſhe was always ſure of one of them. She fixed on Auſtria; and the conſequence of that choice, ſo often blamed, was a peace of thirty years with Germany; thirty years of undiſturbed tranquillity, on the only ſide expoſed to an attack. We are not here to examine whether the miniſtry of Lewis XV. did not go too far in this new connexion; and whether its participation in the ſeven years war was not an impolitic meaſure. But it is certain, that even the alliance of the cabinet of Verſailles with the Houſe of Auſtria, did not prevent France from offering protection to every ſtate threatened by the ſuperior ſtrength of that power; that notwithſtanding, or rather on account of that alliance, ſhe interfered as a mediatrix in the war of the ſucceſſion in Bavaria, and in the conteſt for the opening of the Scheldt; and that till the year 1789, there was no ſovereign of any conſequence in Germany, not excepting the King of Pruſſia, who did not more or leſs endeavour to gain her friendſhip; to many of them an object of the firſt importance. As long as the alliance with Auſtria interfered not with other intereſts, France, with reaſon, adhered to it: while, on the other hand, it only depended upon herſelf to return to her former ſyſtem, whenever

Auſtria

Auſtria ſhould betray intentions incompatible with the tranquillity of Europe; and that with the ſuperior advantage now ariſing from the power of Pruſſia, and the influence of that ſtate on the north of Germany. Surely ſuch a ſituation was the very reverſe of dangerous and unfavourable, and was ſuch as France had never been placed in either before or ſince the treaty of Weſtphalia.

Since the year 1761, France had been cloſely connected with SPAIN. This connexion, founded upon the celebrated Family Compact, ſecured to France the reſources, by no means unimportant, of a nation advantageouſly ſituated in her vicinity; gave her the diſpoſal of a fleet of eighty ſhips of war, and part of the treaſures of Mexico and Peru. It was ſurely no weak, contemptible, and miſtaken politics on the part of France, that procured ſuch a powerful ſupport at the time of her greateſt adverſity. That ſhe was not obliged to ſubmit unconditionally to the terms which England would have impoſed; that ſhe was enabled twenty years afterwards, with the aſſiſtance of her ally, to drive her rival out of North America; that the conduct of Spain was, during thirty years, implicitly ſubmitted to her control; and that ſhe found the cabinet of Madrid diſpoſed to renew that ſubmiſſion, even amid the ſtorms

of

of the revolution: all this ſufficiently ſhows the immenſe advantages derived from the family compact, which muſt be looked upon as one of the moſt important victories in the field of diplomatic policy.

The ſame alliance, moreover, ſecured to her an extenſive and laſting influence in Italy. Naples and Parma grafted their intereſts on thoſe of the more powerful branches of the Houſe of Bourbon. The forces of theſe two allies would have been at the entire diſpoſal of France, in caſe the only power capable beſide herſelf of diſturbing Italy, had agitated plans of conqueſt and aggrandizement, ſuch as to threaten the independence of that part of Europe. But we muſt not ſuppoſe that in ſuch a caſe ſhe could only have reckoned upon Naples and Parma; ſhe poſſeſſed a decided influence over the greater number, and the moſt important of the Italian ſtates. The King of Sardinia, connected with France by the cloſeſt ties of amity, had been at peace with her during half a century; he was allied by blood to the family of the Bourbons, and looked upon the French monarchs as his natural protectors againſt the power of Auſtria, the continual object of his fears. Such were likewiſe the relations between France and her ancient allies, the republics of Genoa and Venice. The Pope, who could

could never be attached to the Emperor, was always more or leſs devoted to the intereſts of France. An Auſtrian prince was indeed upon the throne of Tuſcany; but the ſituation of that ſtate, its diſtance from the centre of the Auſtrian monarchy, and the diſtinct intereſts of its ſovereigns, preſcribed a ſtrict neutrality as its only ſafety in every war between the principal powers, and obliged it even in peace to ſeek the favour of France. In a word, from the Alps to the iſland of Malta (for here likewiſe the politics of France prevailed), there was no point in the whole extent of Italy, except Auſtrian Lombardy, in which France did not alone, or more than any other European cabinet, influence the relations, and direct the conduct of all.

The authority it enjoyed during ſeveral centuries at CONSTANTINOPLE, even till the beginning of the revolution, is well known. The ſecurity of the Turkiſh frontiers againſt the undertakings of its enterpriſing neighbours, the principal object of this ancient alliance, equally uſeful to France and the Porte, had indeed in a great meaſure ceaſed to be fulfilled during the laſt thirty years; but this was not ſo much owing to the weakneſs of the French cabinet, and the diminution of its influence in the affairs of Europe, as to the peculiar ſituation of the Porte itſelf. The decay of the

the Turkiſh empire muſt be attributed to the badneſs of its conſtitution, the errors of its adminiſtration, the defects in every part of its military ſyſtem, and, above all, to the increaſing diſproportion between the always improving governments of Europe, and the barbarous Aſiatic policy of the Ottoman court. While all other nations were progreſſively civilized, cultivated, and enriched; Turkey, ſtill adhering to long-exploded principles and ſuperſtitious cuſtoms, made no advance whatever. The efforts of France, and the mutual jealouſies of its neighbours, long preſerved it from total ruin; but the internal principle of diſſolution overpowered theſe adventitious aids; the duration of this empire became every day more problematic, and at laſt its final ruin appeared to be at hand. The miniſtry of Lewis XV. ought certainly to have ſupported this important ally more effectually againſt the attempts of Ruſſia; and they added to the error here committed, by abandoning the Porte entirely at the peace of 1774. But this fault is conſiderably leſſened, and in ſome degree excuſed, by the difficulties involving a contrary conduct. The buſineſs of defending an ally ſo deaf to the ſuggeſtions of ſound politics; ſo careleſs of the means of its own ſafety; ſo averſe from and incapable of any joint undertaking, and oppoſed to a power ſo diſtant from France, ſo near

to

to itſelf; would have embarraſſed the boldeſt and moſt enterpriſing miniſtry. Yet, notwithſtanding all the changes which happened in Europe, the influence of the French court at Conſtantinople remained undiminiſhed; and had it not been for the French revolution, it would have continued entire until the total diſſolution of the Turkiſh empire, an event which France would certainly have ſpared no efforts to retard.

Russia was the only leading ſtate over which France never enjoyed any permanent influence. The reaſon of this is evident: their general intereſts in the balance of Europe, which they mutually though tacitly concurred to ſupport, was the only important object common to the politics of France and Ruſſia. Their principal point of contact, the intereſts of Turkey, was neceſſarily a ſource of conſtant oppoſition between them. England, moreover, by her great commercial connexions with Ruſſia, had from the beginning of the eighteenth century gradually weakened, and at length almoſt annihilated the influence of the French court at St. Peterſburgh.

Notwithſtanding this, however, it more than once revived when a favourable opportunity occurred; and in the year 1787 produced an advantageous

vantageous treaty of commerce between the two nations. This treaty would indeed have been dearly purchaſed by France if the deſtruction of the Turkiſh empire had been the price of it. But the general ſyſtem of Europe was then ſo happily organized, that France might ſafely regard that cataſtrophe as diſtant and improbable. Two powerful weights were oppoſed to the preponderance of Ruſſia: Auſtria, if divided from it, was always ready to counteract its attempts upon Turkey; if not, Pruſſia maintained the balance; and the hiſtory of the laſt Turkiſh war ſufficiently proves that Pruſſia was equal to the taſk. Thus the greateſt danger which France could ever dread from Ruſſia, was averted without any immediate effort of its own.

There was another and a very important point, on which it ought to have oppoſed the plans of Ruſſia at an early period. So long as POLAND exiſted, an extenſive influence in all the north of Europe was ſecured to France. The firſt partition of that country paved the way for its ſubſequent annihilation; and France beheld that partition with unexpected indifference. This was a great and unpardonable fault; the greater too, as France might probably have averted that blow without recourſe to arms, by a decided interference only; and perhaps by a ſimple negotiation

tion with Auſtria, who, of all the powers concerned in the partition, had the ſmalleſt intereſt in it, and evidently the leaſt inclination towards the meaſure. The fault was ſo much the greater, as the partition of Poland required the moſt unuſual of all combinations, the moſt dangerous to France, and at the ſame time that which ſhe might the moſt eaſily have prevented—the coincidence of Ruſſia, Pruſſia, and Auſtria. No one will attempt to juſtify or even excuſe this fault, which ſufficiently proves the profound lethargy of the French miniſtry in the laſt years of Lewis XV.: but its conſequences were in reality leſs prejudicial to France than is commonly ſuppoſed. The formation and execution of ſuch a plan in the very ſight of France, was for her the moſt unfavourable circumſtance attending it: but the political diſcredit of that conduct could in fact only attach to the miniſtry and government guilty of ſuch negligence. In the place where I ſhall diſcuſs the relations of the powers concerned in that partition, I ſhall endeavour to prove that the treaty of 1772 neither deſtroyed nor materially injured the balance of Europe, ſo as to hurt the intereſts of France; that it was even uſeful to her in ſome reſpects; that her influence in Poland was ſtill conſiderable; and that the total diſſolution of that kingdom, though undoubtedly prepared, was by no means decided, by the firſt partition.

Though France was not ſufficiently active in oppoſing the ſubjection of Poland, ſhe was, on the other hand, more ſucceſsful in directing the affairs of *Sweden*, according to her own intereſt. An unhappy conſtitution, which, under the appearance of ſecuring the prerogatives of the ſtates, introduced faction and diſorder, had, ſince the year 1720, deprived that kingdom of all dignity and conſequence, and gradually converted it into a province of Ruſſia. By the ſubverſion of this conſtitution, the deliverance of the King of Sweden, and the reſtoration of that independence to the government, without which it was but a powerleſs faction; it was evident that Ruſſia muſt be deprived of one of the chief inſtruments of its preponderance in the North. The French miniſtry accompliſhed this important revolution. The plan was formed at Paris; the King of Sweden was from thence directed and encouraged to this great undertaking, and relying on the friendſhip of France, he achieved it in a manner equally fortunate and ſudden. This event, ſo favourable to the influence of France in the North, and ſo contrary to the wiſhes of the court of Peterſburg, was brought about in the year 1772; at a time when the miniſtry of Verſailles ſeemed to have reached the laſt ſtage of indolence and weakneſs: how can we then believe that France had ceaſed to hold an important place in the general ſyſtem of Europe?

What

What happened in Holland in the year 1787, can only be a proof of the momentary weakneſs, by no means of the utter decay, of the political influence of France. The changes brought about in that country by England and Pruſſia were certainly hoſtile to the intereſts of France. They were indeed doubly prejudicial to her: they ſtrengthened the party which had always been in oppoſition to France; and they threw the government of the United Provinces, probably for a long time, into the arms of Great Britain. But what, after all, was this mighty change, when conſidered in a proper light? The momentary ſubjection of a party, which France had long ſupported; which had often triumphed by her aſſiſtance; and was far from being ſubdued for ever*. This party, encouraged, and more than once armed, by France, had, during more than a century, made head againſt its rival. The latter took advantage of the moment when the violence and extravagance of its adverſaries induced two great powers to offer protection to the Houſe of Orange; at which time the domeſtic troubles of France precluded the chance of any effectual oppoſition from her. The attempt was ſucceſsful; but the ſeeds of diviſion remained; and a few years would have ſhown that there ſtill exiſted an Anti-orange faction and French intereſt in Holland,

* Vide Note I.

even if the ſtorms of the revolution had not ſo ſoon diſcloſed the true ſtate of parties there, and the meaſure of their reſpective ſtrength.

The revolution which took place in Holland in the year 1787, was the effect of a concurrence of circumſtances, which cannot with juſtice be ſaid to have occaſioned any permanent change in the balance of Europe. It lowered, for a time, the political credit of the French miniſtry; but did not deſtroy it. Beſides which, it does not properly belong to the period hitherto the ſubject of our reaſoning. We are ſpeaking of the ſituation of Europe before the French revolution, which, with reſpect to France, though not to Europe in general, had certainly commenced in the year 1787; though the ſcenes of that time were only preparatory to the ſubſequent important cataſtrophes.

I think I have proved,

1ſt, That, during the period we have been ſpeaking of, the political ſecurity of France was as great and as firmly eſtabliſhed in every eſſential point, as could be deſired or imagined; that her geographical ſituation, the nature of her frontiers, the magnitude of her internal reſources, and even the general intereſts of ſurrounding nations,

nations, combined not only to ſupport that ſecurity, but to enſure it in the completeſt manner.

2dly, That the influence of France in the federal ſyſtem of Europe was fully adequate to her real, political importance; that it was diminiſhed ſince the time of Lewis XIV. by ſo much only as it had then been carried too far; and that it was owing to the temporary errors of a weak adminiſtration, not to any unfavourable change in the balance of power, nor to a poſitive decreaſe of this influence itſelf, that it failed in ſome particular inſtances to operate with energy and effect.

3dly, That France, till the commencement of the revolution, was feared by all the greater powers; while her friendſhip and favour were ſought and cultivated by moſt of the ſmaller; that her relations with Germany were more ſtable and advantageous than in any other period of modern hiſtory; that every apprehenſion Ruſſia might occaſion was ſufficiently counteracted by the ſituation of the other powers; that her alliances, her patronage, or her policy, enabled her to govern, excluſively or principally, in all the ſouthern ſtates of Europe; in Spain, in the greater part of Italy, in Switzerland, and in Conſtantinople; and that the loſs

of influence ſuſtained by the partition of Poland in the year 1772, was repaired by a more ſolid and effective connexion with Sweden.

4thly and laſtly, That France, conſidered as a maritime ſtate, was more than once the ſucceſsful rival of the only nation ſhe had cauſe to fear; that her inferiority was never permanent; and that the laſt naval war in this period was the moſt ſucceſsful and honourable ſhe had ever waged againſt England.

It is this period, the peace of 1783, and the time between that and the beginning of the revolution, that we muſt look to in order to judge of the conſequence of France in the general ſyſtem of Europe. Let thoſe who can perceive nothing but decay and diſorganization; nothing but unnatural alliances, contempt of all laws, and neglect of all federal principles, in the latter years of the French monarchy: let them, if they have the aſſurance to do it, in defiance of hiſtory, and in oppoſition to undeniable truths, aſſert, that France was then degraded to a ſubordinate rank; was incapable of maintaining the balance; was abandoned, perſecuted, and deſpiſed by the reſt of Europe: but they ſhould not merely aſſert all this; they ſhould prove it *.

* Vide Note K.

AUSTRIA:

AUSTRIA.

That dread of a dangerous preponderance on the part of this ſtate, which from the beginning of the ſixteenth, to the end of the ſeventeenth century, had principally influenced the politics of Europe, has been conſiderably diminiſhed ſince the treaty of Weſtphalia; and eſpecially ſince the wars of Lewis XIV.; from which time, whatever may have been the ſecret views and wiſhes of her ſovereigns, Auſtria has more frequently been engaged in wars for her own preſervation, and in defence of the balance of Europe, than to aggrandize herſelf. The moſt brilliant epoch in the hiſtory of this monarchy was the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the immenſe inheritance of Charles V. ſeemed about to be again united under the ſceptre of its ſovereigns: but the principles of the political balance prevailed againſt the genius of Auſtria and the victories of Prince Eugene; and the treaty of Utrecht placed a Bourbon on the throne of Spain*. After the death of Charles VI. a dangerous ſtorm gathered about the Houſe of Auſtria. It was to its own firmneſs in the firſt place, and in the next to the weight which England, at this criſis, threw into the ſcale of the Queen of Hungary (thereby again defeating the plans of France), that Auſ-

* Vide Note L.

tria was indebted for its preſervation from that danger, and for the maintenance of her rank in Europe, with the greater part, though not the whole of her poſſeſſions. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle reſtored the Imperial houſe to its former place with reſpect to France and the German empire; only what Pruſſia had wreſted from it, was irretrievably loſt; and the laſt attempt to recover it, terminated unſucceſsfully, after ſeven years of unavailing bloodſhed.

Of the principal changes in the general political ſyſtem, during the eighteenth century, there have been two advantageous and two prejudicial to the power of Auſtria. The favourable events were,—1. The gradual enervation of the Turks, which from the time of the treaty of Paſſarowitz was continually progreſſive; and, 2dly, the alliance with France in the year 1756. The firſt of theſe changes delivered Auſtria from her moſt dangerous enemy; and thus left her free to devote to other objects, a conſiderable force, formerly kept in conſtant readineſs to oppoſe that hoſtile power. The alliance with France enabled her to maintain her influence in Germany, where her authority would have been very much weakened if that power had formed a connexion with Pruſſia. This alliance likewiſe ſecured to Auſtria the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of a province, which, on account of its

diſtance from the reſt, muſt always have been defended with difficulty, and never without great expenſe.

The changes prejudicial to the Houſe of Auſtria, were, on the one hand, the extraordinary aggrandizement of Ruſſia; and, on the other, the growth and conſolidation of the power of Pruſſia. The aggrandizement of Ruſſia diminiſhed the beneficial effects which the decay of the Ottoman empire would otherwiſe have had for Auſtria; and this contemptible neighbour was replaced by a power, whoſe ſtrength and ambition, whoſe activity and enterpriſing ſpirit, required the conſtant vigilance of the Auſtrian government. The elevation of Pruſſia was an event of the greateſt importance to the Imperial houſe; it deprived it of one of its moſt valuable provinces, of half its influence in Germany, and much of its weight in Europe. The treaty of 1756 was not an adequate compenſation for this loſs; and it muſt, on the whole, be confeſſed, that the unfavourable changes conſiderably overbalanced the events that were fortunate for Auſtria in the eighteenth century. Her only important acquiſition, after the death of Charles VI. was that part of Poland aſſigned to her by the treaty of 1772: but that was only an equivalent for ſimilar augmentations to the territories of Ruſſia and Pruſſia, concerted between

thoſe

thoſe powers. The acceſſion of Auſtria to that treaty was more a matter of neceſſity than of choice*.

Auſtria has therefore, in no inſtance, deſtroyed the balance of Europe for her own advantage. Her relative importance in the general ſyſtem has rather been diminiſhed than augmented in the laſt century; and becauſe ſhe has always been inferior to France in her geographical, political, and federal relations, as well as in her means of defence, ſhe has ſuffered more from the changes that took place in the laſt century. Perhaps, indeed, when impartially conſidered, ſhe, of all the leading powers, has the juſteſt grounds of complaint.

The active and enterpriſing character of Joſeph II. produced, indeed, many projects of extending his dominions, and of rounding their limits, which alarmed his neighbours, and were the ſubjects of heavy complaints of uſurpation and ambition. But the truth is, that not one of theſe projects was carried into execution†; and inſtead of demonſtrating a total

* Vide Note M.

† "Notwithſtanding the ambitious character of Joſeph, he continued, during his whole reign, to be more alarmed for the ſafety, than gratified by the extenſion of his dominions." —SEGUR.

want of all federative principles, and the deſtruction of all political equilibrium, their fate, on the contrary, affords a ſtriking proof of the continued exiſtence of a federal conſtitution, of a ſyſtem neither weak nor contemptible. The firſt of the plans of Joſeph which attained to any degree of maturity, was that which had part of Bavaria for its object. He ſeized the opportunity to execute it when the younger branch of the Houſe of Wittelſbach became extinct by the death of the Elector Maximilian Joſeph. The reſult of that undertaking is well known: the King of Pruſſia oppoſed it with arms; the courts of Pruſſia and France employed all the powers of negotiation to induce Auſtria to renounce pretenſions evidently unfounded. Juſtice prevailed; and Auſtria, at the treaty of Teschen, received ſcarcely one fifteenth of the country of which ſhe had claimed the half. Even that trifling acquiſition was purchaſed by conſenting to wave all future objections to the ſucceſſion of the King of Pruſſia to the Franconian principalities.

The ſecond undertaking of the ſame nature was directed againſt Holland. The Emperor took advantage of the troubles in which a war with England had involved that republic, to ſet up a number of pretenſions which had no foundation

ation but his will or power. He declared the barrier treaty of 1715 to be null and void; required the limits of the Netherlands to be reſtored to the ſtate in which they were before the treaty of Nimeguen; and laſtly, inſiſted upon the opening of the Scheldt, which Holland was accuſtomed to conſider as a death-blow to her commerce, and which had been expreſsly forbidden by the treaty of Weſtphalia. Here was one of thoſe caſes in which the weaker can only ſeek refuge againſt the uſurpation of a ſtronger power in the common intereſts of the reſt, in the firmneſs of their oppoſition, in the juſtice and efficacy of their meaſures. Had there no longer exiſted any law of nations, no longer any federal conſtitution in Europe, Holland would only have had to chooſe between an expenſive, and probably unſucceſsful war, or an unconditional ſurrender of what conſtituted much of the ſecurity of her frontiers; of Maſtricht, of the ſovereignty of the Scheldt, &c. Her ſituation was the more critical, as the very ſtate from which Holland was naturally to expect the greateſt aſſiſtance, was engaged with her antagoniſt in one of thoſe "monſtrous alliances," which are now ſaid "to have deſtroyed the very foundations of the whole political ſyſtem," and "to have delivered up the ſmaller ſtates, without reſource, at the mercy of the greater."

Did

Did the conſequence really juſtify theſe ſiniſter concluſions? The very reverſe. Notwithſtanding the importance France attached to her connexion with Auſtria, and all the advantages ſhe had derived from it in the American war, then juſt concluded; notwithſtanding the ties of blood which united the Emperor and the Houſe of Bourbon; France ſtepped forward as a mediatrix in behalf of Holland, and conducted the affairs of that ſtate with all the impartiality and energy of the moſt enlightened politics*. The Emperor was compelled to forego all his pretenſions; the Dutch preſerved their frontier towns; the Scheldt was not opened; and the whole danger ended with the republic being obliged to pay a comparatively inſignificant ſum; and even of that, France undertook to diſcharge a conſiderable part, in order to bring the matter more ſpeedily to a concluſion.

The third great project of the Emperor was that which impelled him, in the year 1788, to declare war againſt the Ottoman empire. A diſcuſſion of the origin and progreſs of this war would be foreign to my purpoſe, but the termination and reſult of it afford the ſtrongeſt and moſt irrefragable arguments againſt the aſſertion that, "at the commencement of the French re-

* Vide Note N.

volution,

volution, the balance of power was an empty term." When the Turkiſh war broke out, the internal diſſenſions of France were ſuch as to prevent her taking any active part in foreign political relations; yet, notwithſtanding this temporary annihilation of ſo important a counterpoiſe, the plan concerted between the powers of Auſtria and Ruſſia was defeated by a judicious combination of the remaining members of the federative ſyſtem. The efforts of Pruſſia, England, and Sweden, in behalf of the Porte, prevailed to ſave her; and the two powerful allies were ſtopped in the midſt of their brilliant victories by the active and energetic politics of the mediating ſtates. Auſtria reſtored all her conqueſts at the peace of Sziſtow. I cannot but look upon this treaty as among the moſt remarkable events in modern hiſtory. The utility of a ſyſtem of equilibrium, the efficacy of federative principles, the triumph of negotiation over arms, have been ſeldom ſo conſpicuouſly and ſo honourably diſplayed; and, what is ſtill more important to our preſent inveſtigation, the date of this event is the very ſame at which the federative ſyſtem is ſaid to have reached the laſt ſtage of diſorganization and decay—the year 1790.

PRUSSIA.

I have ſpoken, in my firſt chapter, of the political relations of this power, and its beneficial influence on the general ſyſtem of Europe; and it is unneceſſary to repeat what I there have ſaid. There is, however, among the general obſervations of the Author of *L'Etat de la France*, upon the changes which have happened in the eighteenth century, one that applies more directly to Pruſſia than to Ruſſia or England, and which appears to require a nearer examination.

He aſſures us, in the firſt place, that he is far from intending to condemn the efforts and ſucceſs of thoſe princes, who, taking advantage of favourable circumſtances, have raiſed the nations under them to unexpected power and greatneſs; but the ſource of the evil (ſo he continues after this very equitable declaration), "the ſource of the evil is not in the changes themſelves, or in the views that led to them. It lay in the improvidence of other governments, careleſs of adapting their own ſituations to the new ſtate of things produced by theſe events; and in the ſhortſightedneſs of ſtateſmen, unmindful that an eſtabliſhed federative ſyſtem affords its members, if they know their own intereſt, ample means *to prevent every increaſe of power tending to deſtroy the harmony of their relations*,

relations, or to make every ſuch aggrandizement contribute to the maintenance of thoſe relations, without recourſe to the violent meaſures of deſtructive and uncertain war."

A moment will be ſufficient to convince us, that, if applied to the elevation of Pruſſia, this cenſure is utterly unfounded*. There was only one power in Europe impelled by great and obvious intereſts to reſiſt, in every poſſible manner, the aggrandizement of Pruſſia; and the hiſtory of the three Sileſian wars will ſhow whether that power beheld it with indifference. All other nations, without exception, were more or leſs intereſted in its favour; though ſome may at firſt have been averſe to it. Every man ſufficiently acquainted with the principles of political equilibrium to calculate its conſequences, muſt ſurely have deſired ſuch a change. We have already ſeen what advantages reſulted from it to *Germany*; and I have on more than one occaſion pointed out wherein it has been favourable to *France*. Had not Pruſſia riſen to her preſent greatneſs, the independence of the Empire muſt have been continually expoſed to the dangers of

* It muſt evidently be directed, principally, if not excluſively, to that event. For how the aggrandizement of Ruſſia, a natural conſequence of its civilization, or how the aſcendant of England, the effect of her commerce and colonial poſſeſſions, could in any way have been prevented, is not very eaſily imagined.

internal

internal uſurpation or foreign cabal. The Emperor would have aimed at abſolute dominion on the one hand; or, on the other, the greater part of Germany would have been a ſcene of inteſtine diviſion and confuſion, or a prey to the fatal influence of a foreign power. This was ſufficient to convince every enlightened ſtateſman, whatever his perſonal inclinations, or particular principles, that the influence of Pruſſia was not only uſeful, but neceſſary. There had only been one opinion in Europe on this point for more than thirty years. It was reſerved for our times to give additional confirmation, and even an unforeſeen extent, to this opinion; and to ſhow that circumſtances might exiſt in which the power of Pruſſia could be uſeful even to Auſtria; could in ſome reſpects contribute even to her ſecurity and welfare. This, in the year 1789, would have been called a paradox: in the year 1802, it is a ſimple, evident, incontrovertible truth.

There appears, therefore, no ſufficient reaſon to have induced the potentates of Europe to *prevent, in time*, the extenſion and conſolidation of the power of Pruſſia. They would have acted very unreaſonably, had they oppoſed a change ſo favourable to their general intereſts; and the only thing they can properly be reproached with, is, their having too long refuſed

to acknowledge thoſe intereſts; too long and too obſtinately combated the acceſſion of a weight ſo happily adapted to the federal relations of the general ſyſtem. It would be no leſs unjuſt to aſſert, that the formation of this new power was not "made to contribute to the maintenance of the due harmony between the former members of the federal conſtitution;" for Pruſſia was as happily and wiſely interwoven in the general intereſts, as any of its former component parts, and perhaps more ſo.

The aggrandizement of this kingdom has only in one reſpect been prejudicial to the tranquillity and ſecurity of the reſt. It could not immediately acquire the extent and ſolidity neceſſary to enſure the permanence, and anſwer all the wants of its new poſition. Its territory, at the end of the ſeven years war, was not ſufficiently extenſive for the part it had to act; its revenues were not adequate to the efforts required by its ſituation; its provinces were ſo divided, as to increaſe the difficulty of defending its frontiers. This induced a neceſſity of extending its limits; and *progreſſive aggrandizement* became in a certain degree the conſtant political maxim of Pruſſia, as the only means of maintaining her influence, and a rule of ſelf-preſervation. This reſtleſs activity frequently rendered her a ſubject of appre-

henſion to her neighbours, until ſhe had firmly eſtabliſhed herſelf: and the plans thereby produced, even diveſted of all ambitious motives, were ſuch as to render the Pruſſian ſyſtem extremely inimical to the ſpirit of the law of nations. Hence the partition and ſubſequent annihilation of Poland. Theſe events were occaſioned no leſs (perhaps more) by the wants of Pruſſia than the ambition of Ruſſia: wherefore we ſhall here examine more particularly their connexion with the general ſyſtem, their character and effects.

I have already, in the preceding part of this work, expreſſed my opinion concerning the juſtice and propriety of that meaſure. This I once more repeat; and will here diſtinctly declare my ſentiments of that and every ſimilar political proceeding: theſe are, That the principles of the federal conſtitution ought to be as ſacred in the general ſyſtem of nations, as the laws in the interior of every ſtate; that no political conſideration, whatever its importance, or general utility, can excuſe an action manifeſtly unjuſt; that juſtice ought to be the firſt and prevailing principle in all views of policy, in every poſſible conjuncture; that the violation of that principle, although it may occaſionally and partially, or in its remote or accidental effects, be productive of good, is nevertheleſs always ruinous in the end; and that

no ſituation, no wants, no declared or ſecret motives, no future hope, no pretext of private or general intereſts, can juſtify ſuch a violation.

This declaration will, I hope, ſufficiently exempt me from the imputation of becoming the defender of proceedings, which, by diſguiſing uſurpation in the cloak of juſtice, by trampling under foot the moſt ſacred principles, and by undermining the credit of all governments in the minds of all people, have brought ſo many miſfortunes upon Europe. But while I thus condemn the *principle* of the Poliſh partition, I may be permitted to differ widely from thoſe opinions of its *conſequences*, that prevail among the political writers of the preſent day, eſpecially with regard to its influence on the balance of power. After attentively conſidering the ſubject, I am perſuaded the partition of Poland was very far from being prejudicial to that balance; which, in a certain point of view, it even contributed to preſerve; and that it has rather been favourable, than adverſe, to the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in Europe.

The following are the grounds of this opinion:

1ſt. The condition of Poland preſented ſuch a contraſt to that of its three powerful neighbours,

as

as was highly unfavourable as well to the foreign relations, as to the domeſtic welfare of the former. Two of thoſe powers had made very conſiderable progreſs in every branch of national wealth and civilization; aud the third, though by no means ſo far advanced (in ſome reſpects even behind Poland), was at leaſt evidently in a ſtate of improvement. Poland, on the other hand, was reſtrained from any material advancement by a conſtitution which was a continual ſource of anarchy; which indeed was nothing more itſelf than conſtituted anarchy. And though the ſpirit of reform had been powerfully excited in this kingdom in the laſt ten years before its abolition, though it at length produced the plan of a more regular form of government, and had even proceeded to put it in execution; ſtill it is evident the diſproportion between its ſtrength and that of the ſurrounding ſtates would have continued; and conſidering the ſtart thoſe nations had got before it, the lapſe of time would probably have ſerved to increaſe, rather than diminiſh the difference. The neceſſary conſequence of this diſproportion was the continual dependance of Poland upon one of its neighbours; and the conſequence of that dependance was the continuance of domeſtic faction, foreign cabal, and inteſtine diſſenſions. Such would have been the fate of that unhappy country, whatever the

nature of its new conſtitution. This focus of diſorder, formed in an active, ingenious, ardent, and not unwarlike nation, muſt neceſſarily have kept the north of Europe in conſtant uneaſineſs and alarm, would have multiplied the plans and counter-plans of cabinets, and have made it abſurd to reckon upon ten ſucceſſive years of peace. This focus has vaniſhed. The great maſs of territory between the Oder and the Black Sea, the Carpathian Mountains and the Frozen Ocean, is now governed by three ſovereigns, who have at leaſt no conſtant principle of diſorder, jealouſy, and diviſion between them; who are at liberty to devote themſelves, each according to his means and penetration, to the civilization and improvement of their reſpective countries; and who need only ſubdue their own ambition, in order to live in peace and amity with each other. All this is indeed but a feeble and melancholy conſolation for the deeply wounded ſpirit, the too juſt indignation and regret of a POLISH MAGNATE: but the judgment of every impartial politician will pronounce it a great and important advantage; an advantage which all the north of Europe, and perhaps Poland itſelf, will in leſs than a century have felt and acknowledged.

2d. The partition of Poland has not deſtroyed the equilibrium between the powers concerned in it;

it ; their reciprocal relations have become by ſo much more ſtable and ſecure, as they have at leaſt in one, and that a very important reſpect, been rendered more ſimple and permanent. The ſhare allotted to each has been in due proportion to its former relative ſtrength and extent of territory : in their common plan of aggrandizement, they provided againſt the preponderance of one over the others. With reſpect to the maintenance of peace among them, it appears to me rather a favourable circumſtance than otherwiſe, that the points of contact are now ſo numerous between their reſpective territories. Theſe were formerly divided by a country which none of them could conſider a ſafeguard, becauſe it was no where fortified, and not eaſily defended ; but which they all occaſionally uſed as a magazine or a place of arms ; while, by making it the theatre of their military operations, they at once economized and multiplied their reſpective reſources. The ſlighteſt miſunderſtanding now endangers the immediate intereſt of all the three ſtates ; wherever the war breaks out, it muſt be carried on in their own country ; and the ſuffering party bears all the miſchief and deſtruction that attends it. In this ſtate of things, the deſire of remaining at peace muſt ſurely be more ſerious and effectual than it was before.

The balance of power was not merely uninjured by the Poliſh partition; that event even tended to ſtrengthen and improve it. The equality of the partition was only apparent; for the weaker parties were in fact much greater gainers by it than the ſtronger. This circumſtance, the moſt important of all, deſerves to be more attentively examined.

I argue from the two following principles; if two or more nations of very unequal magnitude, are increaſed in an exact *numerical* proportion (that is, with reſpect to their territorial extent, their population, revenues, &c.), the *political* reſult will always be more advantageous than i n that proportion to the ſmaller ſtate; and if two ſtates, of which one has its territories ſufficiently rounded, while the other yet wants that compactneſs, extend their territories in an equal degree, the advantage of the latter is without compariſon more conſiderable than that of the former.

It will be eaiy to decide upon the conſequences of the above partition, if theſe principles be admitted, and I think the truth of them is evident from the very nature of the things themſelves. The advantage which Pruſſia derived from the meaſure, exceeded what accrued to the others. If Pruſſia, for example, acquired as many hundred ſquare miles as Ruſſia did thouſands, the

real

real increaſe of ſtrength reſulting from theſe reſpective additions, was the moſt important for Pruſſia. Hitherto all the exertions of that ſtate, the ſtrength of its armies, the number of its fortreſſes, its magazines, its accumulated treaſures, its preparations for defence, had either exceeded, or dangerouſly encroached upon the true baſis of its power. That Ruſſia was enabled by this acquiſition to add 20 or 30,000 men to her armies, was of far leſs conſequence to her, than it was to Pruſſia (without any conſiderable addition to her military eſtabliſhment) to ſecure new ſources of riches and revenue, and to give new ſtrength to the overſtrained ſprings of her bold and artificial machine. With reſpect to the rounding of her territories, ſhe was perhaps a ſtill greater gainer. Auſtria acquired no more by the province of Gallicia than its intrinſic value: for Auſtria had long ſince been a compact and rounded ſtate. But Pruſſia only became ſuch by her ſhare of the partition of Poland, which connected her provinces, till then divided and diſperſed. The boundaries of her territory were now in one continued line, and the detached parts of her dominions were now blended into a ſolid maſs, more capable of uniform activity and effectual reſiſtance. If, while one ſtate is merely increaſed, another is at once increaſed and improved in its ſituation, it certainly cannot be doubtful which of the two is the greater gainer *.

* Vide Note O.

Theſe

Theſe obſervations are deciſive in the preſent argument: they reconcile Europe to the partition of Poland; ſo far at leaſt, as it is poſſible to acquieſce in an unjuſt proceeding. Pruſſia muſt be provided with ſtrength to enable her to cope with any power in Europe, in order to eſtabliſh an effective balance among the principal ſtates, and to carry the general federative ſyſtem to that degree of perfection at leaſt, of which its elements, as they now exiſt, are capable. This is the real and general intereſt of Europe; this is a principle of which no one any longer doubts, who conſiders it with candour and impartiality, and who underſtands the nature of the political balance, and federal conſtitution. Pruſſia was not ſo circumſtanced until the partition of Poland. The genius and heroiſm of an extraordinary prince upheld it ſome time at a degree of elevation, which its ſtrength at that period ſeemed inadequate to maintain: but in order to fulfil her entire deſtination, ſhe required that degree of aggrandizement ſhe has attained by the Poliſh partition. In this important point, that event has proved an additional ſupport to the federal conſtitution, and a general advantage to Europe.

4th. If, then, the partition of Poland was in theſe reſpects conformable to the intereſts of Europe, we ſhall be able to judge definitively of its

its effects, when we have decided, whether, while it confirmed the balance of power between the nations concerned, it did not injure the general equilibrium, or materially prejudice any of the other ſtates.

The greater part of the ſtates of Europe had only a diſtant intereſt in the partition of Poland; to moſt of them it might have been indifferent; and if any of them were particularly injured in leſs important reſpects, they were amply compenſated by the great general advantage produced by the change. There were only two powers that could be immediately affected by it: the OTTOMAN PORTE, and FRANCE.

The partition of Poland was prejudicial to the OTTOMAN EMPIRE, becauſe it gave new ſtrength to the two powers capable of hurting it, and which threatened it with ruin. No ſtate in Europe, therefore, was ſo ſtrongly urged by its intereſts to oppoſe that partition, as the government of Turkey. But the ſtupid indifference with which the Divan beheld proceedings ſo dangerous to its exiſtence, was the ſtrongeſt proof of a total want of policy, as well as ſtrength, in this degraded empire; ſhowed that its vital principle was exhauſted; that it ſtood upon the verge of diſſolution. No external combination could uphold a ſtate, whoſe decline was the reſult of cauſes ſo deeply

deeply rooted. The partition of Poland may, perhaps, have accelerated its ruin; but even ſuppoſing this to have been one of its conſequences, it will ſtill be a queſtion which future experience can alone decide, whether it will in that reſpect have been a ſource of good or evil.

France, by this partition, was deprived of her former influence in Poland. In order to form a proper judgment of the magnitude of this loſs, let us firſt examine, upon juſt principles, the true nature of that influence.

France, as we have already ſeen, enjoyed the higheſt degree of ſecurity in her ſituation, the ſtrength of her frontiers, and her internal means of defence, that any nation could poſſibly attain. In this firſt and moſt important of all political conſiderations, ſhe was not merely favoured above every other country: theſe advantages belonged excluſively to her; there was nothing wanting to render them complete, nothing that ſhe could wiſh for or deſire. No power in Europe could look with the ſame indifference as France upon every change in the relative ſtrengths of the reſt. Her ſecurity could not be greater; her independence could not be more complete. The partition of Poland produced no effect upon the French monarchy with reſpect to theſe

theſe advantages; and as to the additional ſtability accruing from the excellence of her federal relations, nobody will aſſert, or I am ſure nobody will prove, that it experienced any diminution by that partition. The relations of Auſtria, Ruſſia, and Pruſſia, and of France with all of them, remained upon the whole unaltered; nay more, if in any reſpect they were changed, the alteration was in favour of France; for the aggrandizement of Pruſſia, whatever its effects upon the politics of the moment, could not but be ultimately ſalutary and beneficial to her.

It is therefore evident that France could receive no real detriment from the partition in queſtion. She loſt her immediate influence in Poland, that is, the right, or the power of fomenting, and, perhaps, multiplying faction and cabal; of adding to the cauſes or pretexts of commotion; of perpetuating confuſion and anarchy in that unfortunate kingdom *. A loſs of that nature was ſurely not prejudicial to the federal ſyſtem of Europe: no upright and enlightened ſtateſman would deplore ſuch a loſs, even though his own country were the loſer.

* Had France been able to introduce and maintain a good conſtitution in Poland, ſhe ought undoubtedly to have ſpared no effort to accompliſh it. But as things ſtood at that time, ſuch an undertaking would have exceeded the powers even of a Lewis XIV.

5th. All theſe arguments will not only apply to the firſt partition of Poland, but likewiſe to the ſubſequent partitions, and final abolition of that kingdom *. The events, however, are perfectly diſtinct: the abolition was by no means a neceſſary conſequence of the treaty of 1772. Had Poland remained in the ſtate it was placed in by that treaty, France would have been in every reſpect a gainer. She would then have united the advantages accruing to the general ſyſtem of Europe from the partition of 1772, with the uninterrupted continuance of her influence in the remaining kingdom of Poland. That kingdom was ſtill conſiderable, and might, notwithſtanding its paſt misfortunes, have played an important part in the north of Europe, had its means been more profitably and judiciouſly applied. From the year 1788 the true method of accompliſhing this had been actually adopted; and it was only in the general confuſion and diſorder introduced by the French revolution into all political relations, that the independence of Poland could have been annihilated without oppoſition. All eyes were fixed on the bloody ſcenes created by the diſturbances in France; all attention was engroſſed by the war which thoſe diſturbances had produced. The diſſolution of Poland ſeemed only an unimportant epiſode, which did not even attract the regard, much leſs

* Vide Note P.

awaken

awaken the activity, or call forth the effectual oppoſition of Europe in general.

The partition of Poland is one of the events on which the enemies of the former ſyſtem of Europe dwell with peculiar pleaſure; the favourite theme of the admirers of the French revolution; of all thoſe, who more or leſs endeavour to juſtify the violent proceedings, the uſurpations and ſubverſions, of the laſt ten years. That no precedent or example of one act of injuſtice can juſtify or excuſe the commiſſion of another, and that ſucceſsful violations of right can never eſtabliſh the legitimacy of ſubſequent ſimilar violations, is ſufficiently obvious to thoſe who regard principles as ſomething more than mere forms of ſophiſtry. But, alas! the immutable principles of juſtice prevail but little in the commerce of the world or the ordinary ſphere of ſtate policy. They are ſpeedily ſilenced, when any great intereſt ſtands, or appears to ſtand, in oppoſition to them. Thus have thoſe perſons who maintain the neceſſity and utility of the late changes in the federative ſyſtem, repreſented the partition of Poland as an event not only highly unjuſt, but extremely prejudicial; as having deſtroyed the balance of power, and at once prepared and juſtified the total ſubverſion of the ancient political edifice. It appeared

peared to me of the greateſt conſequence to refute ſuch arguments, and to ſhow that the partition of Poland, however unjuſt in its principle, was not in its conſequences ſo detrimental as has been repreſented; that it has rather tended to ſtrengthen than undermine the political ſyſtem; and has neither been an immediate nor collateral cauſe of new revolutions or uſurpations. I ſhall have ſufficiently fulfilled this intention, if the foregoing obſervations are not found deſtitute of foundation; and at the ſame time ſhall have combated and diſarmed the ſevereſt cenſure upon the former political ſtate of things in Europe; as far as it could be done without departing from a ſtrict adherence to ſacred principles.

RUSSIA.

The Ruſſian empire, from the firſt moment of its elevation to a place among the principal ſtates of Europe, poſſeſſed every foundation of power requiſite and deſirable for a nation of the firſt rank; ſuch as many others had been unable to acquire by centuries even of ſucceſsful efforts. Its immenſe extent, its remote ſituation, its great military reſources, and the dread with which it inſpired its neighbours, aſſured to it a degree of ſtability and ſecurity, of which no other ſtate in Europe, except France, could boaſt. There

was none that ſo little required a continued influence in the relations and affairs of the reſt; yet we ſhould look in vain for a nation, whoſe territory is productive of materials, ſo numerous and valuable, by which to eſtabliſh the moſt important connexions with all the nations of Europe; and, without any violent meaſures, to open a ſource of extenſive, continual, and at the ſame time always peaceful influence.

The conſtant reſtleſſneſs of this ſtate, and the plans of conqueſt and aggrandizement which its rulers inceſſantly agitated, were partly owing to the natural, though not laudable, propenſity of the human mind, to arrive by the ſhorteſt way at an object in view. They attempted to ſuperſede the neceſſity of gradual and peaceful cultivation (the moſt certain and honourable method according to ſound policy, though ſometimes ſlow and troubleſome), by haſty and violent meaſures. They originated likewiſe in the impatience and ambition of princes, who overlooked the treaſures they poſſeſſed, and forgot their domeſtic concerns in the purſuit of diſtant objects. If the ſovereigns of this immenſe empire had not only devoted a part of their attention and their means, as ſome of them have laudably done, but had directed their whole activity inceſſantly and excluſively to the cultivation of their fertile pro-

vinces, and the civilization of their ſubjects; if they had made a proper uſe of their natural advantages; Ruſſia would have been one of the moſt flouriſhing monarchies in the world, without any wars of aggrandizement; and the reigns of Peter I. and Catherine II. would have been the admiration of Europe in a much more exalted ſenſe than they now are*.

The addition made to this empire by Peter the Great, when he acquired the provinces on the Baltic, was more juſtifiable by the nature of his internal wants, and conſequently more conſiſtent with the principles of ſound policy, than any of the Ruſſian conqueſts in the eighteenth century. But the plans of his ſucceſſors moſtly originated in unbounded thirſt of fame and dominion, or miſtaken ideas of the true intereſts and ſtrength of nations; and ſome of them were excited by coſmo-political dreams of the ſplendour of paſt times. Theſe plans deſerved the oppoſition they met with, and would have juſtified a greater. As extravagant as they were arbitrary, they troubled the peace of Europe in the north and eaſt; they excited wars, without even the ſlighteſt pretext of juſtice; and were wanton invaſions of the balance of Europe abſolutely unneceſſary to the real intereſts of Ruſſia. While the cabinet of Peterſburgh agitated projects of this na-

* Vide Note Q.

ture,

ture, Ruſſia was the conſtant object of the vigilance and anxiety, of the plans and counter-plans of all the neighbouring powers, and of every ſtateſman in Europe.

Theſe are truths that cannot be diſputed. But have the numerous projects and reſtleſs activity of Ruſſia, has the ſucceſs that crowned ſome of her enterpriſes, materially affected the political ſyſtem, or deſtroyed the balance of Europe? This is a queſtion of a very different nature; and if the reverſe of all this be fully eſtabliſhed by an appeal to experience, the coloſſal power, the enormous ambition of Ruſſia, will ſerve to demonſtrate the ſtrength, not the weakneſs, of the former federative ſyſtem; will prove the wiſdom of a conſtitution which all the efforts of a power ſo great, ſo unruly, and ſo ambitious of preponderance, were unable to overwhelm.

If we conſider the condition of the Ruſſian empire at the death of Catherine II. we ſhall find its effective ſtrength by no means adequate to the extravagant ideas generally entertained by her cotemporaries. Its population, riches, and revenues, were not in proportion to its ſize, or to the extent and boldneſs of the projects of its government. Its armies were not much ſuperior, even in numbers, to thoſe which Auſtria,

France, or Pruſſia, could any of them ſend into the field; and they were inferior in point of effective ſtrength, if we conſider the territorial magnitude of the Ruſſian monarchy, and the diſtance of its central point from the principal theatres of war. Ruſſia, notwithſtanding her formidable appearance, was not more powerful than France or Auſtria, nor perhaps much more powerful than even Pruſſia: for we are to compare not merely the maſs, but the nature of their reſpective forces, the facility of moving and applying them to different points, and the policy by which they were directed. There was always, therefore, more than one power ſufficient by itſelf to counterbalance the weight of Ruſſia; and we are informed by hiſtory that the ambition of the court of Peterſburgh has often been effectually checked even in its moſt favourite undertakings.

The firſt partition of Poland (for the others reſulted from circumſtances quite unconnected with any combinations of federal politics) appears to ſtand in contradiction to this aſſertion. Ruſſia was then aſſiſted in the execution of her plans by the two ſtates whoſe ſeparate and contrary intereſts afford the moſt effectual barrier to her undertakings, and on whom the northern and eaſtern powers rely for the maintenance of their

their independence. But this tranſient union of Auſtria, Pruſſia, and Ruſſia, was a ſingular phenomenon, produced by a conjunction of extraordinary circumſtances, aſſiſted by the genius of one of the greateſt men of any age, and beyond the ſphere of all the calculations of ordinary politics. Such phenomena muſt always defeat them; they exceed the limits of the ſcience, and expoſe its inſufficiency. A ſimilar combination will, perhaps, not occur in the courſe of many centuries; it could never laſt; its permanence would be in contradiction to the nature of things, and to the neceſſary order of all political relations. An intimate connexion between Ruſſia and Auſtria, neceſſarily excites the jealouſy of Pruſſia and her allies; while ſuch a connexion between Ruſſia and Pruſſia muſt awaken that of Auſtria and the nations in alliance with her *. Thus was a conſtant and neceſſary counterbalance oppoſed to every alliance between Ruſſia and either of thoſe powers; and ſhe has often felt, but never more remarkably than in her laſt war with Turkey, that this was ſufficient to deſtroy the effects of all her dangerous projects.

The views of the Empreſs were on that occaſion aſſiſted by Auſtria. In oppoſition to every rule of ſound policy, Joſeph II. engaged in a war, which, even if crowned with the moſt

* Vide Note R.

complete ſucceſs, could never have contributed to his real intereſts. Whatever he could expect to gain by it, cannot, for a moment, be compared with the danger of throwing the greateſt and moſt valuable part of the Ottoman empire into the hands of Ruſſia. It is more than probable that the Emperor, in moments of calmer reflection, became ſenſible of his true ſituation; more than probable that he would have renounced the undertaking before the total annihilation of Turkey. He purſued it, however, with extraordinary zeal ſo long as the firſt enthuſiaſm was unabated; and it is not eaſy to pronounce what conſequences theſe joint proceedings might have produced, if an alarm for the balance of Europe had not excited an oppoſition in another quarter, which ſpeedily put an end to the danger of the Porte.

The hiſtory of this war has convinced all thoſe who ſaw, in imagination, the giant ſtrength of Ruſſia redoubled by a ſecond throne in Conſtantinople, that the ſyſtem of Europe is not without reſources even againſt the menacing preponderance of this formidable ſtate. Not only Pruſſia prepared to oppoſe the deſigns of Ruſſia, even England became the ſoul of an Anti-ruſſian confederary; England, who might perhaps have beheld the aggrandizement of that empire with

leſs

leſs concern than any other power. All the hopes of the two moſt powerful and ambitious monarchs in Europe were inſtantly defeated. The King of Sweden, though not ſufficiently ſupported, ſtept forward, unexpectedly, an active and dangerous antagoniſt of Ruſſia; he alarmed the Empreſs in the heart of her empire; he made her tremble for the ſafety of her capital, and proved that even ſtates of the ſecond order, when favoured by political combinations, may arreſt or reſtrain the undertakings of the moſt powerful by timely diverſions. On the other hand, the King of Pruſſia, after having ſeparated Ruſſia from her ally, by the treaty of Reichenbach, and thus deſtroyed the ſtrength of the alliance, menaced the frontier of her empire with a numerous army. The treaty of Jaſſy completed the preſervation of the Porte; and the city of Oczakow was the only conqueſt retained by Ruſſia, the ſolitary fruit of all her bloody victories.

Thus did the federal conſtitution of Europe poſſeſs ſufficient ſtrength and ſtability to reſiſt, effectually, the preponderance even of Ruſſia, however irreſiſtible it might appear; and Ruſſia was compelled to move within the limits aſſigned to her by the principles of the political balance, notwithſtanding the many advantages of her ſitu-

ation, her gigantic dimenſions, her apparently inexhauſtible ſtrength, and the enterpriſing and ambitious characters of her ſovereigns.

ENGLAND.

I am, at preſent, only examining the political ſtate of Europe before the French revolution. It is, therefore, in her political relations alone, that England can here come under conſideration. Her commercial conſtitution, with its influence upon the reſt of Europe, will be the ſubject of a ſeparate chapter. A ſubject ſo extenſive and important requires a diſtinct and particular diſcuſſion; it will be as much for the advantage of the reader, as it is the intereſt of the writer, to keep it entirely unmixed with every thing foreign to it.

I ſhall prepare the way for ſome obſervations on the political ſituation of England, by quoting the author of the *Etat de la France:* the following paſſage is the ſubſtance, the quinteſſence of the opinions of French politicians on this ſubject; and the writer himſelf calls it "*An hiſtorical Recapitulation of the Offences committed by* ONE NATION, *and of the Grievances of all* THE REST."

"We have ſeen how the Engliſh government," ſuch are the words of this remarkable paſſage,

paſſage, " truſting to its ſituation (beyond the reach of all continental ambition), and relying on the reſources derived from a ſubſidizing commerce, adapted its political conduct to the national views of commercial aggrandizement, extenſion, and uſurpation; how it encouraged every principle of diſcord among the powers of the continent to divide and weaken them; how it every where aſſumed commercial preferences; how it formed engagements, of which the tenour and duration were determined by its own convenience; how it meddled in all political diſputes to embitter them, and inſinuated itſelf into all conventions to diſſolve them; how it oppreſſed every country in Europe ſucceſſively with the burden of its ſuccours, inceſſantly making changes in the ſyſtem of exiſting relations, producing falſe combinations of intereſt and power, and creating a partial ephemeral balance in oppoſition to the principles of the general equilibrium; in ſhort, how it ſucceſſively turned to account the weakneſs or the ſtrength, the ambition or the prudence, the harmony or diſcord of all nations, great or ſmall, by carefully inflaming the paſſions, and taking advantage of the wants, the dangers, and the alarms of the moment; profiting by the confuſion of a multitude of intereſts, almoſt all at variance with each other, ſo as to eſtabliſh, by its own perſeverance and uniformity,

uniformity, a diſtinct intereſt, the ſole object of all its views—that of its power rivalling every other power; that of its commercial ſyſtem rivalling and excluding the commerce of every other country."—The author aſſures us that this picture has been drawn without anger or malice. Of this he would perhaps find it difficult to convince even his own countrymen, at leaſt the enlightened part of them. But whatever may have been his intentions or his feelings in this ſtatement, it is our duty to proceed without anger or malice to examine it.

Whether the intereſts of Great Britain, her induſtry and commerce, are indeed ſo oppoſite to thoſe of all other nations; and whether her government can find its real advantage, in the conduct of which it here ſtands accuſed; theſe are queſtions I cannot diſcuſs until I enter at large upon the commercial relations of that country. The preſent ſubject of our conſideration is, whether it has really ſo acted in the courſe of the eighteenth century? and whether that which the author denominates *An hiſtorical Recapitulation* of its offences, is ſupported and confirmed by the evidence of hiſtory?

This long ſtring of accuſations, when properly conſidered, is reduced to a ſingle charge; the ſtated

ſtated crimes of the Britiſh government are nothing more than her offences againſt FRANCE. It is evident that England, from the remoteſt time, but more eſpecially ſince the decay of Spain, has had but one perpetual enemy in the whole circle of Europe. It requires no argument to prove that the Britiſh government muſt deſire to be at peace with all the world, except France *; that the weakeſt and moſt ignorant, the maddeſt adminiſtration (if ſuch an one could ever be placed at the head of affairs in England), would never wantonly abandon ſo obvious a principle; that to foment or engage in continental wars, could never be conducive even to the momentary intereſts of Great Britain; that England poſſeſſes not the means of invading the powers of the continent, and can never become dangerous to the independence of other nations by projects of conqueſt or ambition; and that, with reſpect to political relations, every idea of uſurpation, dominion, or tyranny, on the part of the Britiſh government, muſt not only be unfounded, but in the higheſt degree abſurd and ridiculous.

Theſe indiſputable truths are confirmed by the hiſtory of a whole century. All the wars in which England has been engaged, were either immediately and excluſively with France, or occaſioned by events in which France was prin-

* Vide Note S.

cipally

cipally concerned*. France was always the object, and the only object, ſhe had in view in all her alliances, her ſubſidies, her efforts by land and ſea. This at length became the ſole baſis of Britiſh politics; ſo that the naval and military ſyſtem of Great Britain was eſtabliſhed with reference to France excluſively, and directed entirely againſt her. This obſervation juſtifies, in the firſt place, the caution with which every reaſonable and impartial perſon in Europe ought to receive accuſations againſt England, from the pen of a French writer †: it weakens, beſides, inaſmuch as it ſimplifies, the maſs of what is called the offences of ONE NATION, and the grievances of ALL THE REST. With reſpect to political relations, England can never have ſinned againſt all other nations, but by injuries done to France. The queſtion between England and Europe is, in every poſſible caſe, reduced to a queſtion between England and France; and the reſentment, hatred, and oppoſition of Europe can never be awakened by the conduct of England, except where the intereſts of France and thoſe of Europe are the ſame.

* Vide Note T.

† On the other hand, the paſſionate declamations of an Engliſh writer againſt France are to be received with the ſame caution. There are ſome honourable exceptions on either ſide. But I leave to any man acquainted with the political writings of both countries, to determine conſcientiouſly, in which theſe exceptions are moſt rare.

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The following clear and ſimple principle will therefore guide an impartial and enlightened public in its judgment on the conduct of England in every war in which it has been, or may hereafter be engaged.

1ſt, In every war between France and England, of which their reſpective intereſts are the only motives, Europe may remain an unconcerned ſpectator, without interfering in their ſeveral rights and pretenſions.

2dly, In every diſpute or war in which the conduct of France endangers the ſecurity and independence of other nations, the oppoſition of England is conſiſtent with the intereſts of Europe.

3dly, In every war or diſpute in which France is in danger of being oppreſſed, diſmembered, or deprived of her juſt and ſalutary influence, the co-operation of England is at variance with the intereſts of Europe.

Before we apply theſe principles to the wars which took place between France and England, before the revolution, it will be neceſſary to premiſe a few general obſervations on the reſpective ſituations of thoſe two nations.

Which

Which of theſe two is moſt likely to endanger the balance of power, and to threaten the independence of Europe? This queſtion might be anſwered in the ſhorteſt and moſt deciſive manner, by the teſtimony and authority of French writers themſelves, if I were to employ, for that purpoſe, the arguments and declamations by which they have, during the laſt fifty years, been endeavouring to prove, that the internal national ſtrength of Great Britain cannot be compared with the foundations of the power and greatneſs of France. According to their aſſertions, "the whole power of England is a precarious fabric, upon a deceitful foundation, which the firſt ſevere ſhock may convert into a heap of ruins. The riches of England are not real, ſolid, and laſting, but imaginary, artificial, and tranſient; depending upon circumſtances of the moment, and to vaniſh as ſpeedily as they aroſe, whenever a change ſhall happen in thoſe circumſtances: the influence of the Britiſh government in Europe is as unnatural, and not leſs unſtable than the baſis of its power; and will ſink, together with that power, into nothing, whenever Europe ſhall underſtand its true intereſts." On the other hand, according to theſe politicians, "the power of FRANCE has a great and unalterable foundation; ſhe derives inexhauſtible reſources from a fruitful and extenſive territory; her real and ſolid riches are

of a nature very different from the precarious ſupplies of England's commercial induſtry; to the momentary illuſions operated by the gold of her rival, France oppoſes the neceſſary, durable, unalterable influence of a nation endowed with endleſs reſources; and whoſe geographical, military, and political advantages render it at once ſecure and powerful."

It would be eaſy to draw ſuch concluſions from theſe aſſertions as would at once anſwer and put an end to every idea of a dangerous preponderance on the part of Great Britain. But this, with the opinions I hold, would be a mere artifice, a lawyer's quibble, ſuch as I would not even uſe if the preſent work were written with no other object than the defence and juſtification of the Britiſh government. But the caſe is not as thoſe writers have deſcribed it. The power, the riches, and the political influence of England, are as well founded and as real as thoſe of France: England's greatneſs reſts upon a baſis as firm as that of her rival; their reſources and their means may be different, but the reſult is the ſame in both.

It is nevertheleſs true, that France is ſuperior to England in power and influence, if we merely compare the natural and political relations, the geographical ſituation, the offenſive and

and defenſive reſources, the capability of external efforts, of the two nations, without regard to the effects produced by the good or bad uſe of ſuch advantages. Whenever the balance of power is deſtroyed, it is more probable that England will ſuffer by the change, than deſerve to be accuſed as the cauſe of it.

In ſupport of this opinion the following arguments appear to me incontrovertible:

1ſt, England is a maritime power only: her operations on the continent are ſeldom of importance, and have never had any laſting effects; whereas France is at once a maritime and military nation. By a proper application of her ſtrength, France may effectually reſiſt the preponderance of the Britiſh navy: this has more than once been the caſe already, and is equally likely to happen again. When, and as often as it does happen, the advantage is not only decidedly on the part of France, but her ſuperiority is immenſe.

2dly, The only points of contact between England and the other European powers, are her federal, mercantile, and pecuniary relations; her military operations can effect them very little, if at all. Plans of conqueſt and aggran-

aggrandizement are beyond her reach; her armies can at the moſt only ſerve for occaſional expeditions, but never, any more than her fleets, become the inſtruments of any permanent continental dominion. France, beſides the federal, commercial, and pecuniary relations which ſhe poſſeſſes in common with England, has extenſive military reſources always ready to execute any great continental undertaking. She can threaten and promiſe, can act and negotiate: her limits are not, like thoſe of England, unalterably fixed; they are capable of being continually extended; they have been ſo for centuries back; and if, before the revolution, they had reached the point which ought to have ſatisfied a wiſe and peaceful policy, the events of later times have ſhown, that moderation and wiſdom are not allied with ambition.

3dly, France is, and has long been, completely protected againſt every foreign attack; nor is the ſubjugation or deſtruction of her monarchy among the conceivable conſequences of any ſuch attempt. England has not this invaluable ſecurity to boaſt of; ſhe has, more than once, been threatened with actual invaſion; and, what is worſe, if ſuch invaſion were attended with ſucceſs, the conſequences would be, beyond all calculation, deſtructive.

The practicability of a deſcent in England, has been the ſubject of much diſpute. I ſhall not enter here into the merits of that queſtion. Certain it is, that the undertaking would be attended with very great difficulty and riſk; that the reſiſtance in the interior of the country would be extremely vigorous; and perhaps, ſince the late organization of the militia, quite inſurmountable. But it is no leſs certain, that, in the opinions of the beſt judges, the invaſion of England is by no means impoſſible; ſhe has been frequently threatened with it, and has more than once been made to tremble with alarm *. Such an attempt has always been among the plans of the French miniſtry, who conſidered it far from chimerical †. The ſituation of a ſtate expoſed to the bare poſſibility, the remoteſt chance of ſuch a fatal enterpriſe in the courſe of its wars, muſt neceſſarily be ſomewhat more precarious, under circumſtances otherwiſe equal, than that of a nation entirely free from every ſuch apprehenſion.

4thly, An uninterrupted intercourſe with all parts of Europe is important and deſirable for every commercial ſtate. By the pro-

* We find a remarkable inſtance of this in the year 1756, when the nation was ſeized with ſuch a panic, that the threatened deſcent of the French occaſioned the loſs of Minorca.

† Vide Note U.

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duce of her induſtry, and the policy of her government, England can often exclude other nations, and eſpecially France, from many of the markets of Europe; but could never effect this by open force. France has been, and is ſtill, able to exclude all other commercial powers, and conſequently England, from ſome of the moſt valuable provinces on the continent, by the ſuperiority of her arms*. The political baſis of commerce was therefore leſs favourable to England than to France: and England found herſelf, in every continental war, expoſed to danger on a ſide which affected her very exiſtence; a danger unknown to her adverſary.]

Having premiſed theſe obſervations, I ſhall now briefly review the wars between France and England, ſince the treaty of Weſtphalia, in order to determine, by hiſtoric teſtimony, which of the two has in general ſupported the cauſe in which the intereſts of Europe have been embarked.

We have more than once made mention of the wars of Lewis XIV. There can ſcarcely remain a doubt with reſpect to the conduct of the nations engaged in them. The life of Wil-

* One of the chief motives of England in every continental war, has always been the danger of ſeeing the Netherlands in the hands of France, and thus loſt to her commerce. France had never any apprehenſions of the ſame nature.

liam III. was one continued ſtruggle for the maintenance of the balance of power. The war for the Spaniſh ſucceſſion was the laſt act of that glorious drama. It is evident (and even the French writers are unanimous in confeſſing it), that the equity and moderation of the Britiſh cabinet alone, preſerved France from much greater humiliation than ſhe actually ſuffered at the concluſion of that conteſt: any perſon, though only ſuperficially inſtructed in the hiſtory of that period, muſt be acquainted with the attempts of Auſtria and Holland to obſtruct the negotiations; and will admit the indiſputable truth, that the treaty of Utrecht was owing to the exertions and good offices of England alone.

From the treaty of Utrecht till the Auſtrian ſucceſſion war, for a period of more than thirty years, England and France remained in a ſtate of uninterrupted peace. During a conſiderable part of that time, the two rival powers were even connected by alliance; and whatever may be the opinions of enlightened Engliſh ſtateſmen, with reſpect to the wiſdom and utility of ſuch alliances, it is certain that France enjoyed the benefit of them. England, indeed, renewed her former connexion with Auſtria by the treaty of Vienna in 1731; but ſo little did that affect the intereſts of France, that in the year 1735 ſhe commenced and proſecuted, without interruption,

ruption, one of the moſt ſucceſsful wars ſhe ever waged againſt Auſtria; and by the treaty of 1738, ſecured the important acquiſition of Lorraine, not only without the oppoſition, but even by the mediation of England. The great averſion to war that characterized the twenty years adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, was taken advantage of by France more ſucceſsfully than ſhe could have deſired or expected.

The part acted by England in the war for the Auſtrian ſucceſſion, was not only juſtified by her own immediate intereſts, but by the general and manifeſt want of a power to counteract the projects of France, and the neceſſity of effectually ſupporting the ſinking monarchy of Auſtria*. The plans which France had formed for weakening her continental rival for ever, are well known; and let every impartial judge determine whether Europe would have cauſe to rejoice at the ſucceſs of ſuch plans. The aſſiſtance which Auſtria, in that critical moment, received from England, accorded with the true principles of federal policy, and the intereſts of all Europe. This truth was fully confirmed by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. It was a very remarkable circumſtance, that England, at that time, renounced advantages belonging excluſively to

* Vide Note V.

her, and more or leſs indifferent to the reſt of Europe, for the purpoſe of depriving France of advantages which only affected the intereſts of Great Britain, in common with thoſe of all the European powers. Great Britain renounced her conqueſts in America, and gave back the important acquiſition of Cape Breton, to compel France to quit the Auſtrian Netherlands. The whole benefit which ſhe derived from this war, was the reſtoration, as far as poſſible, of the *ſtatus quo* in Europe.

The war which deſolated almoſt every part of the world from the year 1755 to 1763, originated in two perfectly diſtinct cauſes: the one, the difference between France and England concerning their limits in North America; the other, the coalition of the leading powers of the continent againſt the King of Pruſſia. I will not take upon me to determine whether France or England was the aggreſſor in this long and bloody war*. I am taking a general view of political events and their conſequences, altogether diſtinct from the merits or demerits of particular actions or individuals, and conſidering their influence on the general ſyſtem—the federal intereſts of Europe.

In this point of view we muſt allow, that, in the ſeven years war, the projects of France were

* Vide Note W.

as

as incompatible with the intereſts, and even the ſecurity of Europe, as the conduct of England was conſiſtent with the true principles of the federal conſtitution. In the war for the Auſtrian ſucceſſion, England had ſupported the Auſtrian monarchy againſt France and Pruſſia; ſhe now protected Pruſſia againſt France and Auſtria. Under the different circumſtances of either period, her conduct was equally wiſe and ſalutary in both. The maintenance of Pruſſia was not leſs connected with the intereſts of Europe, than the preſervation of Auſtria. The part which England played in the ſeven years war, fully eſtabliſhed her right to the title of preſerver and defender of the federal ſyſtem; which ſhe ſupported againſt every attempt to violate or diſturb it, whatever pretext or authority invaded it.

This war was indeed productive of events of another kind. The power of France in North America was nearly annihilated; her navy was reduced almoſt to nothing; and England remained a conſiderable time undiſputed miſtreſs of the ſeas. But all theſe conſequences (to be aſcribed, moreover, to the errors of France herſelf) were not immediately connected with the intereſts of Europe; they did not counterbalance the beneficial effects of the interference of England in the ſeven years war, and the advantage derived therefrom to the relations of the continental ſtates;

they rather affected France in her individual, than federal capacity; affected her merely as the rival of Great Britain, not as a component part of the general political ſyſtem. It is not ſurpriſing that France ſhould eſteem this war the moſt unfortunate ſhe ever waged; and that its reſult ſhould have increaſed in the higheſt degree the jealouſy, hatred, and enmity, which have at all times inflamed the two nations. The peace of 1762 is alone the great and never-to-be-forgotten crime unpardonable in the eyes of every French politician, the firſt cauſe of all the declamations againſt the inſolence and tyranny of England, the object of everlaſting and implacable revenge. Endleſs complaints followed the peace of 1762, and, notwithſtanding all the victories ſince obtained by France, have continued to be repeated to the preſent day. Theſe are the lamentations of thoſe who were weakened and humbled by that event *. But what has the reſt of Europe to do with them? Was France deprived of her rank and influence in the general federative ſyſtem? Was her ſecurity, was her territory invaded? Did ſhe loſe any of her internal or external means of defence? Did ſhe even ceaſe to be a maritime power, to poſſeſs a navy, commerce, or colonies? Did England preſcribe laws to Europe upon the ruins of her rival?

* Vide Note X.

Did

Did ſhe diſturb, or even threaten, the balance of power? Nothing of all this. At the concluſion of the ſeven years war, the political equilibrium was as complete, nay more ſo than it ever had been; and France continued what ſhe always was, one of the firſt powers on the continent. That ſhe had even not ceaſed to be one of the firſt maritime ſtates, was ſufficiently evinced at the commencement of the following war with England.

This war, the laſt before the revolution, raiſed the French navy almoſt to an equality with that of England, crowned it with ſeveral brilliant victories, and wreſted from Great Britain the ſovereignty of the moſt valuable colonies in the world. Never, indeed, was the little narrow policy, whoſe ſhortſighted wiſdom fancies its own riches in the poverty of others, and builds its own greatneſs upon the weakneſs of its neighbours; never was the mean policy which had ſo long governed and miſled the princes of Europe, more ſeverely mortified than by the final reſult of the American war. It was intended to ruin England for ever, and it prepared the period of her ſolid, unalterable, and independent greatneſs. It was to have erected a new edifice of French dominion upon the ruins of Great Britain: it produced nothing more to France than a deſolating revolution.

tion. But whatever the remote and unforeſeen conſequences of that war, its immediate effects did not diſappoint the hopes of its authors. According to the common, that is, the prevailing ideas of commercial and political advantage, France obtained as much as could poſſibly be gained by ſuch a war: ſhe was alſo a gainer in ſome more eſſential reſpects; her navy was organized anew; her fleets were made to rival thoſe of England; the honour of her flag was re-eſtabliſhed in every quarter of the globe. The peace of 1783 made her great amends, if not complete compenſation, for the injury occaſioned by that of 1762.

If we compare this hiſtorical ſurvey with the above-ſtated fundamental principles, we ſhall find,

1ſt, That moſt of the wars in which England and France have been engaged ſince the beginning of the eighteenth century, have not been immediately connected with the intereſts of the federal ſyſtem; but that their objects have been either entirely (as in 1778), or partly (as in 1756), within the ſphere of the peculiar relations of the two ſtates, the extenſion or limitation of their commercial and colonial ſyſtems.

2dly,

2dly, That in ſeveral of thoſe wars (in the Spaniſh and Auſtrian ſucceſſions, and ſeven years wars, for example) the balance of Europe was more or leſs threatened by France, was maintained and defended by England.

3dly, That there exiſted in none of them any danger of the due influence of France being deſtroyed, or eſſentially diminiſhed, ſo as to injure the general federative ſyſtem; or of England's acquiring an undue preponderance in that ſyſtem.

What now becomes of all thoſe accuſations with which the ſpirit of faction has armed itſelf, to decry the politics of England as a labyrinth of intrigue and cabal; of premeditated verſatility, and ſyſtematic inconſtancy? Where then are the "wars that England has excited?" Where are the connexions into which ſhe has entered merely "to diſſolve them?" Where are the "falſe combinations" ſhe has created? the "ſubordinate, tranſient alliances formed by her, in contradiction to the principles of the general ſyſtem of equilibrium?" The hiſtory of the eighteenth century mentions none of theſe! The ſame views have uniformly directed the conduct of the Britiſh government; a vigilant and active oppoſition to the enterpriſing ambition of France, has been its conſtant

ſtant object. The manner of purſuing it has been different, according as circumſtances have changed. When France was in alliance with Pruſſia, England took the part of Auſtria; when France and Auſtria were united, ſhe declared in favour of Pruſſia. The federal relations of England were always the antitype, and, as it were, the echo of thoſe of France; the political motives of the one were always regulated and influenced by the conduct of the other. In all the great wars of this century, the conſtant plan and endeavour of France was to effect a revolution in the federal ſyſtem: in the war of the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, to aggrandize the Houſe of Bourbon; in the conteſt for the Auſtrian ſucceſſion, to deſtroy all the proportions of power in Germany; in the ſeven years war, to annihilate the King of Pruſſia. In each of theſe wars, it was the conſtant plan and endeavour of England, to prevent any ſuch revolution, to uphold exiſting relations, and to throw her weight into the ſcale from which France had withdrawn her own. It is quite indifferent to the preſent queſtion, whether this proceeded from a generous zeal for the common welfare of Europe, or motives of ſelf-intereſt, or hatred and jealouſy of France. The effect was in either way the ſame; and if it could be a reproach to England to have been guided by the motives which have always regu-

lated the political conduct of every nation in the world; if ſhe really can be convicted of the ſin of having "profecuted, with uniform perſeverance, the intereſts, always predominant, of her power;" yet is it neverthelefs certain, that, on account of the particular political relations of England, theſe her private intereſts were at the ſame time the common intereſts of Europe: the preſervation, the ſecurity, and the equilibrium of the whole federal conſtitution.

There is one point in the act of accuſation againſt England, which, though it naturally falls to the ground, when the whole is deprived of its foundation, yet requires a more particular examination, becauſe it is the moſt frequently repeated, and moſt ſtrongly urged. It is what relates to ſubſidies: "England has oppreſſed all the nations of Europe ſucceſſively with the *burden* of her ſuccours." This ſtrange expreſſion is either entirely without meaning, or its meaning is, that England has incited, or (to uſe a word appropriate to the "burden of theſe ſuccours") has forced the nations of Europe to engage unwillingly in wars contrary to their intereſts and their wiſhes.

In the great maſs of idle, common-place declamations, which, in a ſuperficial and credulous age,

age, are handed from one writer to another, and (alas! we muſt add) from one generation to another, there are ſome ſo remarkably contemptible, as to render criticiſm almoſt aſhamed to make them the objects of any ſerious examination. Of this nature is the whole of this miſerable ſtuff about the effect of ſubſidies in creating and protracting wars. That a little inſignificant prince, incapable himſelf of waging war, obliged to regulate his meaſures by the conduct of the leading powers, and to ſhape his motions according to theirs; poſſeſſing no ſources of revenue, and yet avaricious of money; maintaining juſt ſo many troops as the ſecurity of his perſon, or a pitiful vanity, requires; that ſuch a prince ſhould ſell the ſtrength of his country for ready money, and take part in proceedings indifferent or contrary to his real intereſts, for paltry gold—is conceivable, is poſſible, is not without example. But that any of the principal powers ſhould engage in war merely for the ſake of foreign ſubſidies, muſt for ever remain incredible to every man, who can form an idea of the burdens of war for ſuch a power, and who is acquainted with the general outline only of the enormous expenſes of a ſingle campaign: I mean the expenſes in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word, the pecuniary charges, altogether independent of the numberleſs ſacrifices and dangers which outweigh

all

all the money in the world. I ſpeak entirely within bounds, when I ſay that no ſubſidy ever ſufficed to defray one half of the charges to be encountered by a great nation in the proſecution of a war. No ſubſidies could ever be the principal cauſe of the commencement or prolongation of a ſtate of warfare. Never was there any government ſo depraved, never policy ſo weak and ſhortſighted, as to err ſo extravagantly, ſo madly, in its calculations. However contemptible ſome people may chooſe to hold the principles and judgments of princes and their counſellors, they muſt not impute meaſures to them, ſo obviouſly contrary to their immediate intereſts, even thoſe of the moment.

The only caſe in which one power can offer ſubſidies to another with any proſpect of advantage, is when the mutual intereſts of the two nations are immediately connected in ſome great and pre-exiſting object. Such has been the hiſtory of every treaty of ſubſidy in the eighteenth century. A common intereſt, a common purpoſe, was the motive; the connexion was formed by the mutual wants of the contracting parties. Subſidies did not create the plan, but facilitated the execution of it. Men and money are required for making war. Nothing is more natural than that the ſtate poſſeſſing an abundance of men

men ſhould ſupply its ally with troops; and that money ſhould be advanced by the power which has great pecuniary means. Theſe reciprocal ſuccours are the reſult of a well-concerted, and at the ſame time juſt and honourable policy. Theſe are the fruits of a good federal conſtitution; for every thing that contributes to the maintenance of the equilibrium, and increaſes and improves the means of reſiſting every project of invading it, muſt be productive of great and manifeſt advantage to the whole,

Theſe complaints againſt the prejudicial effects of England's ſubſidies, muſt therefore ſtand or fall with the reſt of the accuſations preferred againſt her. If the part which England acted in the general political ſyſtem was condemnable, and her interference in the affairs of the continent prejudicial; if ſhe overturned the balance of Europe, or alarmed, oppreſſed, and enſlaved her neighbours; then were her ſubſidies the misfortune and the curſe of Europe. But if her conduct was the reverſe of all this; if ſhe ſupported the oppreſſed and perſecuted againſt the ambition of the powerful; if her efforts were in conformity with the true intereſts of the continent, the independence and ſecurity of all nations, and were of a nature to preſerve and defend

fend the balance of Europe; then were the ſubſidies ſhe afforded an advantage, not only for thoſe who received, but even for thoſe who did not immediately partake of them: and they alone will give the name of burdens to theſe ſuccours, whoſe inordinate power has been checked and humbled by the influence of Great Britain.

I am far from having written this chapter with the view of defending the policy and adminiſtration of Great Britain, from the time of William III. until the year 1789; ſhould any one ſuſpect me of that, let him be candid enough to conſider attentively the nature of my ſubject. While I combat the aſſertions of a writer, who, like all French politicians, pays little regard to the principles of equity, and frequently forgets his own when he ſpeaks of England, the ſimpleſt ſtatement of the truth muſt neceſſarily ſometimes take the form and character of an apology. My only object was, to deſcribe the true ſtate and political relations of Europe before the commencement of the French revolution. For this purpoſe it was abſolutely neceſſary to make that country the principal ſubject of my conſideration, which, according to the aſſertions of French writers, has been the ſource of all the wars, convulſions, and misfortunes that have deſolated Europe. By a complete analyſis of theſe ſevere and arbitrary

charges, ſupported by the incontrovertible evidence of hiſtory, I have proved that, at the beginning of the revolution, England was preciſely ſo placed as her own ſafety and the ſecurity of Europe required; that her political influence could not be dangerous to any nation, not even to France, her conſtant and only enemy; that neither deſirous nor able to diſturb the equilibrium of the general ſyſtem, ſhe was, on the contrary, the ſhield and bulwark of that ſyſtem in all the moſt important tranſactions of the eighteenth century.

Let me be permitted, at the cloſe of this chapter, once more to ſtate the object of all the preceding obſervations.

I ventured to aſſert, that we ought, upon the whole, to be ſatisfied with the federal conſtitution, though defective in ſeveral important reſpects, "if between the principal ſtates compoſing that conſtitution there exiſted a due balance of power; if their ſtability were ſecured, their progreſs and improvement unreſtrained; if, in the ſyſtem of their action and reaction, the independence of the ſmaller ſtates were protected (ſo much at leaſt, as, in a community with the ſtrong, the

the weak can be effectually protected); and if there were no ſuch preponderance on any ſide, as to threaten the liberties of the neighbouring ſtates, or endanger the peace of the whole." If the preceding ſurvey of the ſeveral relations of the leading powers be fundamentally accurate, it will not be difficult to form a ſatisfactory opinion of that federative ſyſtem which the French revolution found and deſtroyed. Let any impartial obſerver compare it with what has before been ſaid of the internal conſtitution of each nation, and then decide, whether, " before the French revolution, all the governments of Europe were in a poſition falſe and unnatural with regard to each other, oppreſſive and ruinous with reſpect to their ſubjects."

The federal ſyſtem of Europe, and the law of nations, were yet capable of much improvement; left many reaſonable deſires, many juſt demands, unſatisfied. There was more than one important point relating both to peace and war, which had never been ſufficiently diſcuſſed, and remained to be regulated by general convention. The irregular diſtribution of the territories of ſeveral powerful empires; the uncertainty of their limits, the remote ſituation of their provinces (often entirely ſurrounded by thoſe of other powers); the great number of ſmall defenceleſs ſtates, whoſe very in-

dependence was ſometimes a burden to them ; the numerous and various pretenſions of the different ſovereigns ; and the want, ſo often felt, of a more comprehenſive code of public law : all theſe were evils of which no enlightened European could remain inſenſible. Perpetual peace, the ever cheriſhed, ever diſappointed hope of mankind, ſeemed ſtill beyond the reach of political wiſdom ; the world continued to be vexed with diſputes concerning the limits, the right of ſucceſſion, the privileges of commerce and navigation of the ſeveral powers, and ſtill oftener by the ambition of princes, and the unruly paſſions of their ſubjects.

But all theſe defects would never have induced an impartial judge to condemn the whole edifice as ruinous and unſerviceable. We might have expected from time, and the improved condition of ſociety, the remedies for theſe evils ; our conſolatory hopes of the future were founded upon the ſucceſsful efforts of the paſt. It became more and more manifeſt during the laſt twenty years before the revolution, that the principles of government, and the law of nations, were advancing towards perfection ; and that a period of peace, concord, and univerſal amelioration, was faſt approaching.

The

The following were the obvious ſymptoms of this approaching change:

1ſt. The governments of Europe were at length ſufficiently convinced, that the internal cultivation of their reſpective ſtates was a ſource of riches, power, influence, real glory, and even external ſplendour, far more productive than all the conqueſts and aggrandizements that war or negotiation can accompliſh. This was indeed no new-diſcovered truth; all ages have produced wiſe men who have preached it to the ears of princes, or handed it down in their immortal writings to ſucceeding generations. But it was a new circumſtance, and peculiar to our times, that this bleſſed doctrine no longer remained a dead letter; that it pervaded the ſphere of practical life; penetrated into the cabinets of miniſters, and mixed with the maxims of ſtate. It may be ſaid that princes did not conform to it in their actions; but it was ſurely a great and important advantage, that they fully acknowledged the truth of it; that they openly and ſolemnly renounced the barbarous principles of former times; that they regarded war, not merely (like their fathers) as a breach of God's commandment, but as a pernicious folly, a miſtaken policy, injurious and deſtructive in itſelf; that they condemned it as a poſitive evil, and that their underſtanding was

convinced, although their paſſions were yet unſubdued. Mankind had the greateſt reaſon to exult when they perceived the true principles of commercial policy prevailing over all obſtacles, and combating ſucceſsfully the moſt deep-rooted prejudices. Men recovered from the rage for monopoly, as from a dream of the infancy of human induſtry; their former ideas of the importance of excluſive dominion in diſtant regions, were conſiderably diminiſhed, and the value of colonial poſſeſſions began to be ſeen in its true point of view. The ſame rivalry indeed continued in full force between the commercial nations; but it exiſted in a more reaſonable manner, and was no longer excited by vain phantoms, but contended for ſolid advantages. This evidently led the way to peace among nations; mankind had already paſſed judgment upon wars of conqueſt: the moment was not far diſtant when they would have unanimouſly acknowledged the folly of commercial wars.

2d. A more enlightened, liberal, and benevolent way of thinking, had at the ſame time ſpread through the great body of the people in almoſt every European country. Their eyes were opened to their true intereſts; not only this or that particular war, but all wars were become in the higheſt degree unpopular *. The different rela-

* Vide Note Y.

tions

tions of nations to each other, their reſpective rights and obligations, the extent and condition of their connexions, were every where more clearly ſeen and better underſtood. The ſtudy of the law of nations had advanced with every other branch of knowledge. Men were more generally agreed upon what was juſt and lawful, though they did not always practiſe it. In vain would the governments of Europe have attempted to counteract the ſpirit of the age; it was too powerful for them to control; and they were beſides invited by their own intereſt to favour it. Never was the force of public opinion ſo great; never was the violation of juſtice ſo loudly, ſo energetically, and ſo univerſally condemned, by the diſapprobation and abhorrence of mankind; and whatever might be the caſe with reſpect to the purity of their intentions, or the internal morality of their actions, the principles publicly acknowledged, honoured, and profeſſed by men in general, had never been more excellent and praiſeworthy.

To ſelect this very hopeful period for the object of the bittereſt accuſations; to repreſent it as utterly deſtitute of every true principle of government, every veſtige of the law of nations; appears to me one of the boldeſt undertakings a political writer could ever have conceived. The

eloquence and logic of all ancient and modern ſophiſts combined, would be unequal to the taſk. All books, all treaties, the memories of all men living, muſt be annihilated before the ſanction of incorruptible hiſtory could be procured to ſuch a ſtatement. No! ſhe will hand a very different account, a directly contrary one, down to poſterity! Europe not only poſſeſſed, before the French revolution, all the elements of a law of nations, and the eſſential groundwork of a ſocial conſtitution; an efficient guaranty of the political relations of ſtates, a well-organized federal ſyſtem, and a beneficial balance of power: but the ſpirit with which theſe elements ſhould be animated; an univerſal reverence of law and juſtice; an earneſt deſire to exclude all violence, oppreſſion, and war; a viſible and ſenſible tendency to cultivate the ties of federal union, and to eſtabliſh peace and harmony among all nations: theſe likewiſe had been awakened among us. A ſingle glance at the ſtate of Europe at the concluſion of the treaty of Weſtphalia, and in the year 1786, preſents ſuch a contraſt as muſt at once annihilate a world of unfounded and calumnious declamation.

If, in the year 1786, the queſtion had been put to any candid ſtateſman (for reaſon has nothing

nothing to do with the demands of extravagant enthuſiaſm); if any reaſonable and enlightened citizen of the world, neither blind nor indifferent to the actual defects of the federal ſyſtem, had been aſked, "whether it were adviſable to improve the ſocial conſtitution by a general and ſudden diſſolution of all exiſting relations?" it is probable that his only anſwer would have been a ſmile of contempt, or an exclamation of horror! This diſſolution has actually taken place; and lamentations are now in vain. Nothing more remains for political wiſdom than to ſearch among the ruins of the former edifice, the materials for a new one. But in order that the miſchief may not be irreparable, we muſt baniſh the fatal opinion, that it was unavoidable; and the ſtill more fatal one, that it was uſeful and beneficial. The diſeaſe is too manifeſt to be denied; but a falſe idea of its origin, conceived by miſtaken, and encouraged by crafty empirics, has diffuſed the ſpecious perſuaſion that it was a ſalutary criſis, a neceſſary ſtep to improvement. Till this deluſion be diſſipated, there are no hopes of amendment.

PART II.

Of the Situation of Europe after the French Revolution.

FALSE premiſes lead to falſe concluſions. The author of the *Etat de la France* having deſcribed Europe, before the revolution, as a ſcene of univerſal anarchy and ruin, it was natural to expect he would erect a ſuperſtructure of the ſame kind on that foundation, which is not merely exaggerated, but altogether arbitrary, and in defiance of hiſtory and experience: this was a matter of courſe. But however prepared we might be for ſtrange, unuſual, and paradoxical concluſions, our Author has far exceeded the moſt extravagant expectations.

If it ſhould happen that nothing more remained for the reader of ſome future time, than his dark picture of the former political ſyſtem of Europe; if, from the principal features, the tone and ſpirit of that fragment, it were required to gueſs the remainder of his work; I can hardly conceive that any future commentator would be found poſſeſſed of ſufficient penetration and aſſurance to reſtore the latter part in its true

true ſhape. The moſt rational conjecture would, perhaps, ſuppoſe the following reaſoning: "The revolution found Europe weakened and diſtracted on all ſides; deprived of every guaranty of a due equilibrium, every pillar of its federal conſtitution, every maxim of ſtate adminiſtration, and every principle of the law of nations. It kindled a dreadful war; and the convulſions that enſued, ſubverted the few pillars of the ſocial conſtitution that yet ſupported the tottering edifice. Deſtruction advanced with giant ſtrides; the whole building crumbled into atoms, and Europe became a theatre of ruin and deſolation. But however melancholy the fate of the unhapppy generation that ſurvived this cataſtrophe, however pitiable their ſituation, however critical and hopeleſs the proſpect of their regeneration, they had no right to complain of their lot; they had no real cauſe to lament it. No right, for their misfortune was their fault; they might have foreſeen the approaching evil; they deſerved it by their criminal indifference to the obvious indications of an approaching ſtorm, by their guilty inactivity in the midſt of the daily more viſible decay of their whole ſocial ſyſtem, of their civil, political, and federal relations. They had no reaſon to lament it; for what they loſt was in reality not worth regretting. Their exiſtence had long been diveſted of every thing

that could contribute to its dignity, ſafety, and conſiſtency; the anarchy was complete, however veiled by cuſtom, indolence, and the daily palliatives of a contemptible commonplace policy. The exploſion was not to be avoided; the revolution, and the war it produced, were only the laſt and deciſive efforts of the evil; and whatever a ſuffering world may have endured under the joint ſcourges of theſe two dreadful plagues, yet it may, and it ought ſincerely to rejoice, that the criſis is at length ſurmounted, and the period arrived, when, riſing from the ruins of the paſt, it may erect a new edifice with more ſolid materials, more deliberate wiſdom, and more accurate principles; and hand down to a grateful poſterity the bleſſings of a more perfect conſtitution."

This reaſoning, all built upon the aſſumption of the total inefficacy of our former political and civil organization, will of courſe have no weight where the premiſes are not admitted: and I think I have fully proved, in a preceding chapter, that ſuch poſitions will not bear ſtrict examination. The writer, however, would have been juſtified in proceeding upon theſe grounds to the conſequences above ſtated. Had he been ſatisfied with that, he would at leaſt have avoided the reproach of doing violence to his own premiſes,

of abuſing his principles by unwarranted concluſions, and of having, by a ſingular refinement of ſophiſtry, deduced an arbitrary and falſe reſult from a falſe and arbitrary hypotheſis.

The Author was not ſatisfied with painting the revolution as a neceſſary conſequence of the previous diſorder of Europe, and the war of the revolution, with all its new diſorders, as its natural companion. Such a gradation was not bold and ſtriking enough for him: he paſſed over the revolution, and deduced the general war between France and the powers of Europe, *immediately* from the faultineſs of the former federal conſtitution, the annihilation of all political principle, the diſſolution of the law of nations, and the blindneſs and folly of all governments.

I ſhould exhauſt the patience of the reader were I to recapitulate the ſtring of accuſations, by which, in the firſt chapters of his work, he ſupports this ſingular deduction, and in which he vents his ſpleen under various colours and pretences, and ſometimes in the moſt violent terms. It will ſuffice at preſent to bring forward a ſingle paſſage, which, though one of the moſt moderate, will throw much light upon the general train of his ideas. On a nearer examination of this ſyſtem, we ſhall have more than one opportunity

opportunity of following him in the reſt of his obſervations.

" The war of the revolution," ſuch are the words of this paſſage, " was the laſt ſcene of a hundred and fifty years of improvidence, blindneſs, and impolicy. After having firſt dreaded the aſcendancy of France without cauſe, or from exaggerated motives, and afterwards long diſdained her beneficial influence, the powers of Europe became accuſtomed to diſpenſe with her tutelary preponderance, and made a ſport of her political degradation during thirty years; and when at length ſome unexpected circumſtances enabled a nation, whoſe ambitious politics were never effectually checked but by France, to debate in the moſt public manner, whether ſhe ought not to be extirpated—all Europe took arms, and formed a confederacy as wicked as it was ſenſeleſs! from which moment every veſtige of the law of nations was aboliſhed."—Thus aroſe, according to the Author's ideas, a war, whoſe dreadful conſequences have ſhaken the federal ſyſtem to its foundations; have rendered the preſent ſtate of Europe an enigma; made its future exiſtence problematical; and deſtroyed more within the ſhort ſpace of ten years, than many centuries had raiſed, or perhaps than ages will be able to reſtore. This war was a wanton attempt,

attempt, by the moſt unnatural of all alliances, to build a new political ſyſtem, and eſtabliſh a new diviſion of power upon the ruins of the French monarchy; and thus to reſtore the long-loſt balance of Europe, by for ever annihilating the firſt and moſt important of its elements!

If the events of this war were utterly effaced from the memories of all who witneſſed them; if hiſtory were ſuddenly to ſtop, and the ſpace between 1789 and 1801 to remain a frightful blank for poſterity; ſtill this repreſentation, or rather miſrepreſentation, of its origin, muſt for ever be incredible while a veſtige yet remains of the former ſyſtem of Europe. Such could not poſſibly be the cauſes of that war! would the lateſt poſterity exclaim; and ſhall we who have ſeen and ſurvived it, be impoſed upon by fables, which have not even the merit of being ingeniouſly fabricated?

There certainly was a time when the moſt dangerous attempts were apprehended, not "without ſufficient cauſe," from the ambitious politics of France; againſt whom a general league would then have been a very probable, and at the ſame time juſtifiable and even neceſſary meaſure. It would even then have been a violation of ſenſe and juſtice to project the total degradation

gradation of France, inſtead of defining her proper limits; or to look for the ſecurity of Europe in the diſmemberment, conqueſt, or annihilation of that nation. In a period, however, of ſuch general diſcontent, the extravagant fears of one prince, or reſtleſs ambition of another, or ſecret enmity under colour of the public ſafety, might have conceived or favoured ſo abſurd a plan; which under thoſe circumſtances would not be quite unaccountable, though neither laudable nor wiſe. But what inducement, immediate or remote, could incite the powers of Europe to overwhelm France at the end of the eighteenth century? when at peace with all the world, ſhe was governed by a mild, juſt, and conſcientious monarch; and when ſhe was ſo far from alarming the whole ſyſtem by ambitious views of preponderance, that ſhe gave not the ſlighteſt umbrage to her neareſt neighbours *? None of the continental ſtates could be profited by the ruin of France; not one of them could hope to riſe by her degradation. Among the very abundant political combinations of the age, there is not the ſmalleſt veſtige of a conſpiracy againſt her. The author of any ſuch ſcheme would have been ridiculed as a viſionary projector at every court in Europe. What then could have united all nations in an enterpriſe for which no one had

* Vide Note Z.

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the ſmalleſt motive or inclination, or any reaſonable hope of ſucceſs?

It is perfectly natural, that a perſon deſirous of gaining credit for ſo abſurd an opinion, ſhould recur for that purpoſe to the all-explaining influence of England; the only power that could be conceived inimical to the ſecurity and independence of France. But what childiſh credulity muſt the man ſuppoſe in his readers, who can attempt to perſuade them that the powers of the continent were all leagued againſt that nation, merely to gratify England! that thoſe powers, ſeized with one common mania, departed from all policy, ſenſe, and juſtice; that they ſacrificed every intereſt and advantage on the ſame pile with the elaborate ſtructure of an admirable federal conſtitution—to make England ſole miſtreſs of the ſeas! To give the ſmalleſt colour of probability to ſo extravagant a combination, ſo monſtrous an abſurdity, ſome facts, or ſomething at leaſt in the ſhape of facts, ought to have been appealed to. But where are they to be found? Who has ever attempted to adduce the ſlighteſt proof of all this? And though amidſt the greateſt confuſion, and in the darkeſt periods of the revolution, when the minds of men, inflamed by the wildeſt paſſions, and ſmarting under the ſevereſt ſufferings, eagerly purſued every chimera,

and caught at every wonder to explain their inexplicable fortunes; though there were then ſome impudent declaimers, who in ſome degree ſucceſsfully repreſented the wickedneſs of the Britiſh miniſtry as the cauſe of all the afflictions of Europe; yet how could a writer of the YEAR 8 aſſociate with ſuch incorrigible impoſtors? How could a politician, profeſſedly calm and impartial, give way to ſuch groſs exceſſes of revolutionary violence? How could he be ſo ignorant or unmindful of hiſtory, as to attribute to England the origin of a war, that had laſted nearly eight months, before it ceaſed to be doubtful, whether that nation would maintain the ſtricteſt neutrality amidſt the diſſenſions of the continent?

No! If that accurſed war, which has overwhelmed the federal ſyſtem of Europe, was indeed the effect of a general, premeditated, ſyſtematic confederacy againſt France, the object of that confederacy was at leaſt very different from what the author has aſſerted. If there ever was a coalition, and if the plans of that coalition did really produce the war, it was neither jealouſy of France, nor a deſire to weaken and degrade, nor any ridiculous project of diſmembering that kingdom, that conſtituted its origin and intent. It was formed not againſt France, but the revolution; it was not the aſcendant of the French nation,

nation, (what ground of alarm could that afford in the year 1791 ?) but its hopeleſs diſtractions, that drew down the unexpected ſtorm upon Europe.

It would be foreign to my purpoſe to enter into a particular diſcuſſion of the cauſes of this war*. It is an inexhauſtible ſubject, on which politicians will be long divided; and if ſimilarity of views and uniformity of opinion are ever to be attained in this intricate queſtion, it can only be in other times, and among other men; when truth ſhall have prevailed over all hypotheſes. At preſent I ſhall merely ſubmit my private opinion; and though none of my readers ſhould be inclined to follow it, I am firmly perſuaded I ſhall be able to prove moſt ſatisfactorily, that our Author has eſtabliſhed his upon a ſyſtem devoid of all foundation.

It has always been my opinion (and I know many enlightened ſtateſmen think the ſame), that the war was not produced by a coalition againſt France; that, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, ſuch a coalition never has exiſted, and would have remained an empty ſpeculation, an idle dream of a few miniſters, if France had not compelled the powers of Europe, in a certain degree, to realize it. Even after this, when the

* Vide Note A A.

common danger was at the higheſt, the coalition was only a name without meaning. The war was reſorted to and commenced by France herſelf, that is, by the dreadful ſucceſſion of outrageous and barbarous factions which enſlaved, diſtracted, and tyrannized over her during ten years. What rendered it inevitable, was the wide difference between thoſe reigning factions and the reſt of Europe, in their ſyſtems of adminiſtration, and in all their principles of internal and external policy; which created a diſcordance not to be remedied by any peaceful meaſures. The revolutionary chiefs, aware of all this, and feeling the precarioufneſs of their own ſituations, recurred to the war as the only means of maintaining themſelves, or as the laſt refuge of their deſpair; and they would have contrived to involve all Europe in this misfortune, even though every government had been anxious to avoid it, even had they coaleſced to preſerve peace. Unimpelled by any coalition, at a time when the very name did not yet exiſt, and not a veſtige of it was perceptible, they challenged ſucceſſively every nation, near or remote, continental or maritime, and at length made one general declaration of war againſt every ancient eſtabliſhment. Thus Europe had no alternative but the dangers of the conteſt on the one hand, and perhaps ſtill greater danger, with which, on the

the other, thoſe demagogues threatened the very elements of the ſocial conſtitution.

Such appears to me to be the origin of the war upon the French revolution: for either there never has been a war againſt France, or it has only been a conſequence of the other. In this opinion I may be wrong: but the miſtake is certainly not owing to prejudice or want of reflection. My judgment has been formed by a ſtudious obſervation of the characters and actions of the two great parties in the awful conteſt which, during ten years, has deſolated Europe. On the one hand, I have inceſſantly watched the fate and progreſs of the revolution, the ſpeeches and writings of its chiefs, and the manifold teſtimonies they themſelves afford in the accuſations and replies with which each declining or fallen party threw the blame of the war on its ſucceſsful adverſaries. On the other hand, I have carefully examined and compared every document and correſpondence laid before the public, and all thoſe imaginary treaties ſaid to be the baſis of the coalition; I have collected every authentic information concerning the opinions, views, and conduct of its pretended founders and patrons. Laſtly, my opinion is ſupported by the ſolemn, unanimous aſſurances of many highly reſpected ſtateſmen; to whoſe

authority in a problem of this nature, I may ſurely be permitted to refer.

Having thus declared my opinion, I will puſh impartiality ſo far as to ſet it entirely aſide, and will endeavour, if poſſible, to forget it. I intend to meet the author of the *Etat de la France* on his own grounds, and will ſuppoſe the war to have been produced by a coalition of the powers of Europe.

The firſt, and I think the moſt important, queſtion will then be, whether ſuch a league, when impartially conſidered, would be ſo condemnable, ſo unjuſtifiable, ſo impolitic, ſo monſtrous as the Author aſſerts; whether it would juſtly incur the abuſe he heaps upon it?

I will here once again declare my own opinion, without inſiſting upon it as a demonſtrable truth.

I do not conceive it to be univerſally true, "that a nation has no right to interfere in the domeſtic affairs of any other," and I truſt I ſhall not be ſingular in regarding it as liable to great exceptions. There are caſes in which ſound policy ſuggeſts, and the law of nations permits, an active intervention in the internal proceedings

proceedings of a foreign country. Such a caſe ariſes when there happens in any, eſpecially if it be a principal ſtate of Europe, a diſorder ſo great, general, and permanent (it muſt have all theſe qualities), as manifeſtly to endanger the neighbouring powers. Thoſe powers are ſtill more juſtified in not remaining inactive ſpectators of ſuch diſorders, when there are ſeveral parties contending for the government of the diſtracted country upon various pretences; and the right of legiſlation is diſputed by a variety of claimants. I regard the French revolution as an event of this kind, not merely permitting, but abſolutely requiring the active interference of other nations. The all-deſtructive principles upon which it was founded, the criminal exceſſes and contempt of every right that attended its progreſs, would have juſtified an early oppoſition. The conſtitution of 1791, inſtead of diminiſhing, ſtrengthened and confirmed the right of interference; for no one, even in France, will now deny that it was calculated to organize the anarchy, and of courſe to prolong the miſeries of the unhappy country, and the dangers of its neighbours. What completed, and gave, as it were, the ultimate ſanction to this right, was the ſcene that preſented itſelf immediately after the introduction of that conſtitution. The popular members of the National Aſſembly, and the favourite orators of the clubs

(the men who at that time governed the country), then poured forth the torrent of their abuſe and calumny againſt all the governments of Europe; they commenced an inveterate perſecution of every ancient eſtabliſhment, of every ſacred principle that enſured the obedience of the citizen, and the ſafety of the throne; they called upon all people to throw off their allegiance; and their ſpeeches and writings were a ſeries of reiterated inſults that announced every day more openly the hoſtilities they were reſolved to realize with other weapons.

Under theſe circumſtances, a coalition againſt the *deſtroyers of France*, not againſt France herſelf, would have been prudent, juſt, and beneficial; in every thing the reverſe of a wicked conſpiracy. It would not however have deſerved this meritorious character, unleſs conceived and projected upon principles pure and diſintereſted, with views liberal and enlightened. Every idea of partition, diſmemberment, or ſubjection, being inadmiſſible, the complete independence of France ſhould have been the firſt article, the moſt ſacred and inviolable ſtipulation of the league. Nor ſhould any foreign power have aſſumed the right of preſcribing a new conſtitution; for that would have been out of the province, beyond the juſt policy of its intervention. A

ſtranger in ſuch a caſe has nothing more to do than to remove every unnatural obſtacle to a proper conſtitution, to facilitate the reſtoration of law and order, and to give freedom to the lawful depoſitary of ſovereign authority. Here muſt end all foreign interference; the reſt is entirely a domeſtic concern, to be left to the energy, ſkill, and wiſdom of thoſe intruſted with the buſineſs of regenerating the diſtracted ſtate.

This I conceive to be the only tenable opinion on a ſubject which the Author of *l'Etat de la France* has ſeen in a different light: for he has put a very hateful, and I think very falſe conſtruction upon the plan of ſuch a coalition. Among other things, he ſays, "Can any man reconcile an undertaking of this nature to the true principles of a federal ſyſtem? Can it be aſſerted that thoſe who contrived that immenſe combination of offenſive relations, were actuated by views of general intereſt? Can they be ſaid to have intended to diſtinguiſh the rights of the continental and maritime powers, to define the juſt limits, and ſecure the independence of each? Could this engagement, ſo haſtily and unadviſedly made, be of long duration?" &c. Immediately after this, he ſays, "A league of this nature is neceſſarily in oppoſition to the principles which ſhould be the groundwork of every alliance;" the

" the nations ſo leagued were never allies;" and, " becauſe they found no word in the political dictionary, whereby to denote their monſtrous convention, they were forced to invent a new one; and to give the term *coalition* to that which will be more properly denominated in future hiſtories, a conſpiracy againſt the rights of a ſingle people, and a ſolemn, premeditated renunciation of every principle of the law of nations."

What can we expect to find but nonſenſe, contradiction, and unnatural combinations, if we attempt to apply the principles that ſhould regulate every ordinary alliance, to a league quite extraordinary in its nature? A coalition neither is, nor ever can be, an alliance. Whether in earlier times the word coalition has been uſed in the ſenſe now given to it, is a queſtion of little import; the thing itſelf has exiſted at all times, or might at leaſt have exiſted at any time. It is evident, that amidſt the great variety of ſocial revolutions, there muſt ſometimes occur caſes, in which a temporary, urgent, and truly common intereſt, may ſuſpend every uſual federative relation, and unite all nations in the proſecution of a common object, without regard to the ſimilitude or diverſity of their permanent views. Such an union muſt always be tranſient as the intereſt which

which creates it; but, while it does exiſt, it operates in a manner peculiar to itſelf. An alliance, that is, a permanent league formed for the maintenance of certain permanent intereſts—an alliance of all Europe againſt a ſingle power, is utterly inconſiſtent with any principles of genuine politics: a coalition, the effect of extraordinary circumſtances, may ſometimes be enjoined by neceſſity; and will then be approved by prudence, and ſanctioned by every principle of juſtice.

This very important diſtinction takes all weight from what the Author has ſaid about the "gigantic and viſionary aſſociation of the European powers:" his ſevere and angry animadverſions have no longer an object or a meaning. What have we to do with an alliance, a permanent ſimilarity of intereſts, the poſſibility of long duration? What with the continental and maritime nations, the diſtinction of their rights, and ſecurity of their reſpective limits? Theſe, with every thing elſe the Author has ſuppoſed, ſought, and found wanting in this "monſtrous confederacy," are quite foreign to the ſubject. The whole buſineſs is ſimply a temporary junction of the ſtrength of all nations, in order to obviate a common danger: till that danger be averted, till the all-threatening revolution be diveſted of its hoſtile and formidable character, brought within bounds,

and rendered incapable of miſchief; till then, but no longer, the private intereſts of Auſtria, Pruſſia, Spain, and England, muſt all be confounded in a more important conſideration—the maintenance of the ſocial conſtitution. This being completely ſecured, every thing would return to its former ſtate; the ordinary federal principles would again prevail, and Europe reſume her natural character, and ſubmit to her ancient laws. It is not more conſiſtent with true federal policy to call ſuch a compact "a ſolemn abjuration of all principle," than it is agreeable to the juſt notions of the law of nations to term it an "atrocious conſpiracy," or "a wanton attempt upon the liberties of France."

I am well aware that the right of one nation to interfere in the domeſtic affairs of another (the firſt principle upon which the foregoing argument is founded), ſo far from being univerſally acknowledged, is, on the contrary, rejected unconditionally, and in every poſſible caſe, by many political writers. But however various the opinions of men on this important point, there is ſurely nobody ſo intolerant as to admit of none but his own. Let us then, in order to grant every thing for the moment, ſuppoſe it doubtful whether ſuch a coalition were juſtifiable, even in the very extraordinary and critical ſituation of Europe

Europe after the year 1789; let us ſuppoſe all governments to have been ſeduced by views poſitively falſe, are they, on account of this error, to be branded with the reproach of madneſs or guilt? If it really was an error (which I am very far from thinking), it was at leaſt a pardonable one; pardonable on account of the magnitude of the danger; and pardonable on account of the obvious and immenſe advantage to be derived from the ſucceſs of a well-concerted plan. The true object, whether juſt or unjuſt, of this coalition, and the motives aſcribed to it by the unprincipled ſophiſtry of French politicians, are as different from each other, as the accidental error of a ſkilful calculator, from the ignorance and ſtupidity of a perfect idiot. Suppoſing the powers of Europe to have coaleſced imprudently againſt the *French revolution*, they have not thereby incurred the reproaches they would merit, had they ſenſeleſsly made war upon *France* herſelf.

But the laſt and apparently moſt formidable queſtion is, whether the common ſafety, well or ill underſtood, was really the ground of this general combination? Whether do we not attribute to its authors a degree of wiſdom of which their plans were in truth utterly deſtitute? And whether the idle hope of profiting by the diſtreſs of France, of weakening her for ever, of diſmembering,

bering, and perhaps ſubduing her, did not conſtitute the true though ſecret motive of the undertaking?

To this queſtion I have only one anſwer, which is involved in the following dilemma:—either there never was a coalition, in the ordinary ſenſe of the word, the war was the ſole work of revolutionary demagogues, and the confederacy in queſtion was ſtrictly defenſive; or the common ſafety of Europe was the only object of that coalition. The latter part of the alternative is proved in a few words; *it could have no other motive.* Whatever temerity, perfidy, or folly, may be imputed to, or imagined of this or that government, it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe it ever could be the wiſh, the intereſt, or the aim of all Europe to diſmember or ruin France. Suppoſe Auſtria to have projected a coalition in order to deſpoil her of ſome provinces; ſuppoſe England to have done the ſame with a view to extinguiſh the French navy; it will ſtill remain inconceivable how Pruſſia, Spain, Sardinia, Sweden, Ruſſia, the States of Germany and Italy, and even the Ottoman Porte, were drawn into this ſenſeleſs league. The trite and trivial recourſe to intrigue and bribery, and Heaven knows what ſecret and magic arts, now meets with contempt and

and ridicule throughout Europe, as an exploded fable. How careleſs of truth, how deficient in argument the perſon who can mention a handful of guineas as the cauſe of a coalition of Europe againſt France! as the origin of a league in which the moſt heterogeneous elements combined; in which the natural friends and natural enemies of France were ranged on the ſame ſide; and in which, according to the principles of ordinary politics, it is impoſſible to imagine, much more to aſcertain and define, a common object! How far above all ordinary conſiderations muſt be the aim of a confederacy, which, inſtead of affording any proſpect of advantage to its members in general, exacted many painful ſacrifices; and which expoſed them to a multitude of dangers to encounter a ſingle evil; an evil big indeed with the greateſt of all dangers!

This then is the only alternative: a coalition on the moſt juſtifiable grounds, or no coalition. Every other view of the ſubject muſt be imaginary or abſurd. To me the choice appears by no means dubious. I believe it to be the misfortune of Europe, that there never has exiſted a coalition in the true ſenſe of the word. There was nothing at the beginning of the war in the leaſt reſembling it. The looſe and undefined league

league to which we now give the appellation, was produced by the urgency of a common danger, and the immediate neceſſity of defence: it was not the reſult of a regular, preconcerted ſyſtem of attack. But if ever this opinion ſhall be refuted, if ſome archive, yet a ſecret, ſome more authentic document than the treaties of Pavia, Pilnitz, Mantua, &c. ſhould afford the future hiſtorian of theſe melancholy times, indiſputable proofs of a premeditated, ſyſtematic, and offenſive coalition, though it were only of a few leading ſtates; I here confidently aſſert beforehand, that it will not confirm one ſyllable of what the Author of *l'Etat de la France* has imputed to ſuch a league, and that the general welfare of Europe will be found its only object. If there ever has been a coalition, and in whatever degree it may have exiſted, this muſt have been its only baſis: it could have no other *.

We cannot therefore aſcribe the war to the defects of the federal conſtitution, either before or after the year 1789; for it was in every reſpect foreign to the good or bad maxims and combinations, to the happy or unſucceſsful efforts of ordinary politics. It was an unnatural and unforeſeen event that confounded and defied all human calculation; it was the revolution pro-

* Vide Note B B.

duced

duced this terrible war. The revolution, and that alone, overturned the political ſyſtem by an unfortunate attempt to ſupport it; diſſolved every federal obligation, ſubverted and demoliſhed every pillar of the balance of power, and converted the federal conſtitution of Europe into a ſcene of anarchy and confuſion, whence no human ſkill or wiſdom will ſpeedily deliver it without the miraculous interference of Providence.

That Europe, in its preſent unnatural and helpleſs condition—the dreadful reſult of ten ſucceſſive years of convulſions and misfortune—that Europe now poſſeſſes no federal conſtitution, now ſcarce retains any public law, is a melancholy truth, in which all parties ſeem to agree. The Author of the *Etat de la France* is far from doubting it. The peculiarity of his arbitrary, ſophiſtical, and paradoxical reaſoning conſiſts in his attempt to deduce from an earlier period the ſource of the general diſorder; to withdraw the firſt and only cauſe of it, by an artful miſrepreſentation, from the eyes of his cotemporaries; and thus, if ſucceſsful, to exempt and purify his country from the everlaſting reproach of having brought ſo dreadful a misfortune upon civil ſociety.

But where the connexion between cauſe and effect is ſo obvious as to ſtrike the meaneſt underſtanding, and catch the moſt inexperienced eye, all the efforts of ſophiſtry muſt neceſſarily be vain. The only difference of opinion, the only doubts that have hitherto prevailed, have been concerning the authors of the war; and we may ſafely predict, that even theſe will ſoon be diſpelled by the light of truth; ſo that France, as well as every other nation, will point the curſes of the preſent, and the abhorrence of future ages where they are really due. But ſophiſtry will now attempt in vain to diſpel the conviction, that Europe owes the dangers and diſtreſs of her preſent ſituation entirely to the revolution and its conſequent war.

I ſhall not minutely examine the cauſes that have rendered the preſent war ſo deſtructive in its character, and ſo unfortunate to moſt of the nations concerned in it; of which the dangerous preponderance of France has been the laſt, moſt important, and permanent effect. I ſhall confine myſelf to a few obſervations, of which the truth is too evident to expoſe me to contradiction. That ſeries of misfortunes was not a ſimple phenomenon; it was the reſult of circumſtances extremely complex and intricate. On the one hand

hand genius and depravity, and on the other inevitable inferiority, with deplorable, perhaps condemnable weakneſs, aſſiſted each other to produce it. It is difficult to ſay which was the principal of theſe co-operating cauſes; but each muſt be taken into the account; each was at once cauſe and effect, each at once an original principle and complementary condition of the other. Future ages will do ample juſtice to the extraordinary energy and ſteady perſeverance, the unſhaken intrepidity and military talents, the daring enterpriſes and inexhauſtible reſources of war diſplayed by France amidſt the ſtorms of the revolution, to the wondering nations of Europe in arms. But hiſtory will remind us, too, that this extraordinary vigour grew from the ſame root with a no leſs extraordinary depravity; and that the means of ſuch unheard-of efforts, ſuch gigantic enterpriſes, could only be afforded by a revolution that trampled on all rights, tore down every barrier of civil polity, and gave a looſe to every irregular paſſion. Moreover, this enormous military greatneſs is leſs a ſubject of wonder, when we reflect that every ſocial and civil conſideration, the intereſts of juſtice, and even of humanity, the welfare, and in a certain degree the exiſtence of a great nation, the rich harveſt of the paſt, and

the ſeeds of the future, were ſacrificed to that ſplendid but unprofitable greatneſs.

On the other hand it is evident that the powers leagued againſt the revolution could not imitate the proceedings, adopt the meaſures, and uſe the means of the common enemy, without riſking all they were contending for, and introducing to their own countries the very evils they were combating: the difference always exiſting between the reſources of a coalition and thoſe of a revolutionary government, produced the neceſſary inferiority of the enemies of France. But it is equally evident that this unavoidable diſproportion, this neceſſary inferiority, are far from being ſufficient to explain all the events of our times. Some evil genius ſeems to have perplexed the councils of every cabinet, and paralyzed their political and military energies; for it has been their fate to meet the moſt trying difficulties with pitiful projects, half meaſures, weak and incapable inſtruments, and a deplorable deficiency of every thing the magnitude of the occaſion required. They too late, if ever, learned the character of their enemy, and how to combat revolutionary weapons and reſources. There was no plan, coherence, or uniformity in their proceedings; no

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two of them were of one opinion. Their unfortunate diſſenſions, the fatal influence of their private intereſts, their want of unanimity and concert, the tardineſs and indeciſion of their meaſures, redoubled the ſtrength and courage of their enemy. Capable at moſt of a weak and partial defence, unequal to a vigorous and uniform attack, they formed no effective coalition, but were merely a reluctant aſſemblage of ill-according parts. They were, in ſhort, unfortunately for the intereſts of Europe, any thing imaginable, except what the ſubtle declamations of the enemy, and the eaſy credulity of the age, have repreſented and believed.

The iſſue of a war ſo conducted between ſuch parties, could not be doubtful, and, in fact, was exactly ſuch as had been predicted by all men of judgment and penetration. The firſt of its unfortunate reſults was the entire failure of the original and only object of the coaleſced powers. While they were all waſting their ſtrength, and many of them haſtening to ruin, the revolution was triumphant; the moſt ſcandalous enormities remained unpuniſhed; the perpetrators of the moſt atrocious crimes that ever diſgraced the earth, aſcended the throne of Lewis XIV. aſſumed a plenitude of authority to which the power of that mighty deſpot bears no

 compariſon,

compariſon, and drowned the monarchy of France in the blood of its laſt defenders. But this was not all; they overran the neighbouring ſtates; they devoured the ſubſtance of the richeſt countries in Europe; they carried the ſymbol of their tyranny under the name of the Tree of Liberty, through an hundred provinces; they extended their territory on all ſides by conqueſt, by forced alliances, or by compulſatory treaties; and when all this was accompliſhed, reſiſtance no longer poſſible, the dominion of the revolutionary rulers eſtabliſhed, and the balance of Europe irrecoverably loſt; the ſingle hope that yet remained—that of ſeeing the monſtrous edifice fall to pieces of itſelf—ſuddenly vaniſhed; the ſcene changed, and this coloſſal fabric, theſe new reſources, theſe territorial acquiſitions, theſe forced connexions, this military power and terrible preponderance, were all conſolidated in the hands of a regular, ſkilful, and comparatively popular government. The old revolutionary ſyſtem was demoliſhed as a uſeleſs pile. No principle of rule was now acknowledged but the will and ambition of the reigning party, and the genius of its chief; and this government, thus ſtrengthened and conſolidated, gave laws to a great part of Europe.

Such

Such is the ſtate of things at the preſent moment *. The political ſyſtem which reſiſted the violence of ſo many ſtorms until the French revolution, and whoſe ſtrong foundations had defied the viciſſitudes of fortune, and the lapſe of time, has been converted into a heap of ruins by the revolution, and its neceſſary companion the war. Europe, ſay the friends as well as enemies of the preponderant power; Europe has entirely loſt its balance. Let us now proceed to inquire if there be any hope of ſeeing it re-eſtabliſhed.

* The autumn of 1801. Some important changes have ſince taken place, and, alas! they do but confirm Mr. Genz's concluſions; they caſt a deeper ſhade upon his very gloomy picture. The preponderance he deprecates, has received additional extenſion. While politicians are complaining of the ſinking balance, the Gallic Chief throws his ſword into the ſcale; and "*væ victis*" is the anſwer, if afflicted Europe ſhould venture to remonſtrate. After what they have already ſuffered, the powers of the continent may ſubmit to this.

TRANS.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

Of the preſent Relations between France and the other European States.

BEFORE I enter upon the thorny path that now awaits me, I muſt premiſe a few obſervations to explain as much as poſſible the point from which I ſet out; and from which alone the courſe of my reaſoning can be fairly traced and judged. I hope thereby not only to ſecure myſelf againſt wilful miſrepreſentation, but even to diſarm that lawful criticiſm which does not exceed the limits of its province.

Politics, or, more properly, the diplomatic branch of them, conſiſt of two elements of different natures:

1ſt, An accurate knowledge of the peculiar relations of every ſtate: 2dly, The talent of eſtimating the capacities and characters of the principal

cipal actors on the great ſtage of public affairs, ſo as to form a correct judgment of the nature and object of their views, and of the influence and probable conſequences of their conduct in every political tranſaction. The rules by which a ſtateſman ſhould on all occaſions be guided, ought to be founded upon a due combination of theſe two principles.

It is obvious, that politics, as far as it depends upon perſonal characters and diſpoſitions, is only an art, ſince theſe relations can never be the object of a ſcience. The opinions, inclinations, and paſſions, the talents and abilities of individuals cannot be reduced to general rules: they are various and irregular as nature. Long ſtudy, much obſervation, a frequent intercourſe with the world, and great natural penetration, improved by habit and experience, into a talent of divination, are the indiſpenſable requiſites to a diplomatic ſtateſman. The deepeſt reſearches, the moſt extenſive knowledge, all the advantages of an excellent underſtanding improved by habits of reflection, will not ſupply theſe qualities, or compenſate the want of them.

Practical politics muſt neceſſarily be imperfect as a ſcience; for a conſiderable part of it depends upon theſe perſonal conſiderations, and

and the art of obſerving and directing them. Its moſt elaborate and profound calculations are conſtantly baffled by the influence of human opinions and actions; its apparently moſt infallible concluſions are frequently diſappointed by a ſingle change in the fate of one important perſonage; by a ſtriking thought, a moment of weakneſs or paſſion, by a whim, a capricious fit of favour or diſguſt. Its moſt fatal enemy is death, which frequently defeats its ſpeculations, becauſe it ſeldom forms a part of them. The deceaſe of a ſingle perſon has often deſtroyed the work and combinations of a century; the appearance of one new actor on the great theatre of the world has brought about events which the boldeſt and moſt ingenious politicians could not have diſcovered by an age of meditation.

But however neceſſary, in all political calculations, to keep thoſe circumſtances conſtantly in mind, and not to carry the ſcience beyond its unalterable limits; it would on the other hand be extremely improper to attach too little importance to the elementary and eſſential part of politics. I call that the eſſential part which relates to the abſolute and relative ſtrength of nations; and requires a knowledge of all their fundamental and permanent relations; their geographical ſituations, the political and military

ſecurity of their frontiers, their wants, their powers, their means of invaſion or reſiſtance, the natural and conſtant objects of their induſtry, and their ſeveral predominant intereſts. Theſe are, perhaps, the moſt important articles in the vocabulary of politics; becauſe they are the moſt permanent, and in ſome meaſure the only permanent objects. Whatever changes may take place in the opinions and paſſions, the diſpoſitions and capacities of men, the inclinations and averſions of princes; there will always be certain fixed and immutable points in the changeable ſphere of politics; always ſome fundamental relations, ſome principles of action, which no accidental change can alter or deſtroy. A great and powerful country, advantageouſly ſituated, will, even under a government comparatively weak, always be capable of greater efforts to reſiſt or attack an enemy, than a ſmall, defenceleſs, and divided ſtate, though governed by a prince of extraordinary abilities. A nation whoſe power is ſupported by commerce and induſtry, will on all occaſions act on other principles than a ſtate whoſe greatneſs reſts principally or entirely upon military ſtrength. Amidſt the combinations of private views and paſſions, there muſt always exiſt ſome natural alliances and rivalſhips among nations. The true, that is, the permanent and fundamental, intereſt of each, will,

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ſoon or late, prevail, however perverted, diſguiſed, or concealed, by the temper or the errors of the moment. Political calculations, founded upon theſe principles, will never be entirely diſappointed, never ultimately uſeleſs, notwithſtanding accidental changes and exceptions.

There are therefore two extremes to be avoided with equal care in all political reckonings. On the one hand, the opinion that the permanent relations of ſtates are alone to be conſidered; and on the other, that they are entitled to no conſideration at all. With the firſt of theſe the *art*, with the ſecond the *ſcience* of politics muſt fall. To acquire true notions, whereby to regulate our conduct in politics, we muſt firſt ſtudy the fundamental relations of every ſtate in their whole extent; and then always be mindful of the changes that may poſſibly be occaſioned in theſe by the perſonal circumſtances, the principles, the character, and private opinions of their rulers.

I ſhall here confine myſelf to theſe permanent relations, ſetting aſide all conſideration of perſons. I conſider any nation dangerous to the tranquillity of others when it wants nothing to injure them but the will; whether it be governed by virtuous or depraved characters, guided by true

true or falſe principles. On the other hand, regard the ſituation of a country as helpleſs and precarious, without adverting to the poſſibility of its being exalted above all its dangers by the exertions of an extraordinary prince, and ſo raiſed to a higher degree of power and independence: here again I judge without reference to any thing perſonal, and conclude a nation to be weak and defenceleſs, when ſome unuſual occurrence (ſuch as the birth of a pre-eminent genius) is neceſſary to its preſervation and ſecurity.

Many of my readers will perhaps think me blameable for adhering ſtrictly to this rule, in a picture where FRANCE is the principal figure. But to this blame I muſt ſubmit; becauſe the method I have adopted appears to me the ſafeſt as well as the moſt equitable. It is true, indeed, that the perſonal relations of men in power, can never affect a political queſtion in a higher degree, than where the ſubject is—a nation immediately iſſuing from a great revolution. Much more depends in ſuch a caſe than in any other, upon the character of the government, and the probability of a change in its component parts. But if I renounce many important arguments derivable from theſe peculiar circumſtances, I am the more certain that even the friends of the French government will not invalidate my reaſoning.

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The following obſervations on the political and federal ſituation of France, are therefore entirely confined to her real and permanent relations. I abſtain from inquiring how far the perſonal character and principles of her preſent government deſerve the confidence, or juſtify the diſtruſt of other nations. Its partiſans aſſure us it has renounced all revolutionary projects, and directs its views to ſafety, peace, and juſtice only: others aſſert, that its moderation is but a new cloak for old maxims, which conceals the ſame ambition and perfidy, the ſame oppreſſion and ſyſtematic tyranny that characterized the ruling faction in every period of the revolution. Theſe opinions I leave to the practical ſtateſman, whoſe conduct muſt be materially influenced by them, and to the future hiſtorian, whoſe province it will be to relate and judge the proceedings of this government hereafter. Neither ſhall I inquire whether the duration of the preſent conſtitution of France be within the ſphere of human probability. I will ſuppoſe it durable; could its warmeſt advocate require more? What I am now going to ſay of France is entirely independent of any ſuch inquiry, and muſt be equally true, whether a Bonaparte, a Robeſpierre, or a Bourbon be at the head of the French government.

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We have already examined the ſtate of France before the revolution, her ſecurity, her means of defence, and the nature of her frontiers; in all of which ſhe had nothing left to deſire. She was more happy in the firſt requiſite to a good federal poſition than any nation in Europe. Her conqueſts, in the laſt ten years, are a powerful addition to her ſecurity. She ſtood in no need of them whatever, and has thus acquired a ſuperfluity of political and federal ſtrength. She was ſecure againſt every attack with her ancient frontiers; with her newly-extended limits ſhe may bid defiance to the plans and efforts of all Europe.

But however ſecure and powerful this kingdom was in its ancient ſtate, there were always ſeveral powers in Europe capable of curbing its ambitious views of inordinate aggrandizement, and reſtraining its attempts upon the peace and ſafety of others, as often as it betrayed ſuch dangerous deſigns. It was conſtantly counterpoiſed by Auſtria, Pruſſia, or England; and if any of theſe was not ſingly ſtrong enough to counteract its efforts, it was then effected by a well-directed combination of their means. France was, moreover, ſurrounded by ſeveral independent ſtates, which, though comparatively of little weight, yet ſerved to break the force of the firſt attack;

gave

gave time to the leading powers to aſſemble and prepare for defence; and, united with them, contributed to preſerve the balance at all times. *This ſyſtem is entirely deſtroyed.*

The chief bulwark of the north of Germany, and conſequently of the north of Europe, was the independence of HOLLAND. This rich and reſpected republic had, in former times, often reſiſted the attempts of France, with her own well-directed ſtrength in the hands of ſkilful and intrepid leaders. She gradually declined from her former greatneſs after the peace of Utrecht; but until the French revolution ſhe neither wanted ſtrength nor reſources to make head againſt an enemy; and her political alliances were ſuch as to enſure the maintenance of her rank and influence. The torrent of the revolution has irrecoverably overwhelmed her, and ſhe is now eraſed from the liſt of independent ſtates. Holland has been a province of France ſince the year 1795. And ſuppoſing any favourable change to relieve her from her preſent abject dependance, it is not poſſible to conceive how ſhe could recover any material part of her former importance. Her ſtrength is exhauſted, her frontier towns are loſt; and Belgium in the hands of France, leaves not the ſmalleſt hope of better times. Holland is therefore a part of the dominions

ſions of France, and will be conſidered as ſuch in every future war. Her independence was formerly a ſafeguard to the north of Europe: that ſafeguard is now no more.

The Austrian Netherlands were the next rampart between France and the north of Germany. Theſe provinces were, perhaps, more burdenſome than productive to Auſtria; they were conſtantly expoſed to the arms of France, and their diſtance from the main body of the Auſtrian dominions rendered it very difficult and expenſive to defend them. It muſt likewiſe be confeſſed, that a more liberal view of the ſubject would lead to a wiſh that theſe provinces, the object and theatre of ſo many wars, had long been otherwiſe diſpoſed of*. But however that may be, it is certain, that, ſo long as France did not poſſeſs them, the Auſtrian Netherlands were a great protection to the north of Germany. That France ſhould commence her operations againſt Germany, on the Meuſe, or at her former frontiers, is a difference of no ſmall importance; that ſhe ſhould be able to penetrate immediately into the interior of Germany, inſtead of conſuming one or more campaigns in the conqueſt of Flanders, is an immenſe advantage.

* Vide Note C C.

The third bulwark of the Empire againſt France in the North, was that large portion of German territory that lay between the Rhine and the French dominions. This country, poſſeſſing two of the ſtrongeſt fortreſſes in Europe, and a number of excellent military poſitions, was well ſuited, like the Netherlands, to break the force of a firſt attack. The paſſage of the Rhine (in many places an enterpriſe of little difficulty) is now the only obſtacle to prevent the French armies from overrunning all the northern circles of the Empire as far as the Weſer or the Elbe.

The three ſafeguards thus loſt to Germany, were the more important as they protected the provinces leaſt defended by art or nature. The hiſtory of the laſt war has indeed afforded more than one ſad example of the inſufficiency of art or nature to oppoſe the progreſs of a victorious army; and has ſhown that the ſouth, as well as the north of Germany, is not impregnable to an enterpriſing enemy; but it muſt be allowed that the country between the Mayne and the Alps preſents many more difficulties to an invaſion, than the diſtrict between the Mayne and the North Sea. The laſt is every where open, containing ſcarcely a tenable place, hardly one fortified or difficult paſs, as far as the frontiers of the hereditary dominions of the Houſe of Brandenburg.

burg. One or two pitched battles will always decide the fate of this country, with which the fortunes of the north of Europe are neceſſarily connected. The extraordinary coincidence of circumſtances that ſhielded the north of Germany from immediate danger at the moſt alarming period of the war, rendered her leſs ſenſible of the loſs of her ancient ramparts, and leſs anxious about the conſequences; otherwiſe, the ceſſion of the Rhine diſtricts to the maſters of Flanders and Holland, and the treaty by which the Rhine was made the boundary of France and Germany, would have been objects of greater ſolicitude, more earneſt complaints, and more effectual oppoſition.

Neither is the ſouth of Germany ſo ſecure as it was before the revolution. There too the Empire has been deprived of its moſt important bulwark; for ſuch was Switzerland. The neutrality of this fortreſs of nature, this impregnable poſition, this central point of all military operations, a neutrality conſecrated by ages, is no more: let us not indulge in groundleſs hopes, it is deſtroyed for ever. At preſent there is not the ſmalleſt proſpect of a favourable change; for Switzerland is a province, a place of arms, an intrenched camp of France. Should any political revolution, ſhould the ſpontaneous moderation of the

French government reſtore its liberty, it could never reſume its former independence. The tacit agreement of the leading powers to ſpare it in their ſeveral undertakings; the reſpect for its wiſe and inflexible neutrality, rather the effect of ancient cuſtom, than of policy or moderation: all this is annihilated for ever. In every future war Switzerland will be held by the boldeſt and readieſt competitor. France muſt at all events maintain a great and permanent influence in its domeſtic concerns, and will no doubt, at all times, and under all circumſtances, conſider and uſe it as her property. Here then is an end of all ſafety for Swabia, Bavaria, and the foremoſt provinces of the Auſtrian monarchy! At the firſt ſignal for war, the troops of France will pour down from the ſummits of the Alps upon the ſouth of the Empire; and as Switzerland forms a great point of communication between Germany and Italy, the operations of the French, planned and executed upon the new ſyſtem of warfare, muſt acquire an extent, continuity, and vigour, to which the neighbouring nations can oppoſe no adequate reſiſtance.

The ſtates of the King of Sardinia were formerly a barrier between Italy and France. That monarch was not improperly called the *guardian of the Alps*. For though incapable of effectually oppoſing

oppoſing either of the powers that ſo often conteſted the poſſeſſion of Italy, and though by no means ſo powerful as the intereſts of that country and of Europe required; yet his geographical ſituation, and his many excellent fortreſſes, gave him no ſmall degree of importance, and conſiderable means of defence. While Europe retained its ancient conſtitution, neither France nor Auſtria could indulge a hope of conquering and ſubjecting Italy. The ruler of Piedmont and Savoy was the natural ally of the opponent of ſuch projects.

This ſyſtem is now irrecoverably loſt. Savoy is for ever united to France; and the fortified places of Piedmont are all in the hands of the French government. The future deſtiny of this country, and of the King of Sardinia, lies buried in the obſcurity of the future; but we may confidently predict, that the moſt favourable turn of the preſent criſis can never reſtore the former ſtate of things. Should the King of Sardinia be re-eſtabliſhed in the ſovereignty of Piedmont, he would hardly recover his frontier towns, the eſſence of his ſtrength and the bulwark of Italy. Even if theſe ſhould be reſtored, yet with France on one ſide, and the vaſſals of France on every other, he would himſelf be nothing more than a vaſſal, an impotent vaſſal of the republican chief.

The obedience of the Ciſalpine republic is for ever ſecured to the power whence it derives its exiſtence; the ſubmiſſion of Genoa, Parma, Tuſcany, are alike implicit and invariable. Before the treaty of Luneville, the manifeſtos of France declared, "The intereſts of Europe require that Auſtria do not paſs the Adige." The meaning of this maxim is no longer an enigma. The Adige is the boundary of Auſtria; but it is the boundary of France alſo. The whole of Italy is neither more nor leſs than a French province. French generals, and French commiſſaries, give the law from the Alps to the Straits of Meſſina; and if the conſular authority ſhould reſolve tomorrow to convert all Italy into one republic, under the protection of France, or to incorporate its provinces with the great nation, the important operation would coſt the Chief Conſul nothing more than an order to his military lieutenant, to promulgate his ſovereign decree*.

An undiſturbed alliance had ſubſiſted between France and Spain ſince the year 1762; and as France was greatly more powerful than her ally, there was a diſproportion in the connexion that

* The fact has proved the poſſibility more ſpeedily than even Mr. Genz could have expected. He would probably have deſcribed the very manner in which this event was to happen, had it not been a part of his plan to avoid all alluſion to perſonal character.—TRANS.

led to the dependance of Spain. The Spaniſh government, however, preſerved a certain degree of independence, until the commencement of the revolution, and France did not enjoy an unlimited control of the councils and reſources of her ally. This is now entirely altered: Spain has not preſerved a remnant of freedom or independence; when France commands, ſhe muſt be obeyed, though the utter ruin of the Spaniſh monarchy were the neceſſary conſequence. The words of Lewis XIV. "There are no longer any Pyrennees for France," have been more literally true ſince the year 1795, than when he ſpoke them. The expenſes of a conqueſt have been ſpared; but the conqueſt of Spain is nevertheleſs complete. That nation has vaniſhed from the liſt of independent ſtates, in every political and federal reſpect; and the power it may hereafter poſſeſs, muſt be looked upon merely as an addition to the reſources of France, and be eſtimated as ſuch in every political calculation.

It is not therefore enough to ſay that France has extended her limits on all ſides by conqueſt; has added to the impregnability of her frontiers by new ramparts, and increaſed her influence over the neighbouring ſtates in a formidable degree: the truth is, that France, in her preſent ſtate, is contained by no limits; every thing round about her either is really, if not nominally,

her territory and property, or may be made a part of her poſſeſſions, at the firſt convenient opportunity, by the nod of her ſovereign. Spain, Italy, and Germany, without fortreſſes, without means of defence, without ſecurity political or military, are open to the attacks of France: and it now only depends upon the moderation and juſtice of the French government (mere perſonal guarantees, which every moment may alter or deſtroy), whether France ſhall rule alone in the whole weſt of Europe, whether any law ſhall be obeyed but hers.

The foundation upon which this enormous power was firſt raiſed, and ſtill continues to reſt, is by no means frail or precarious. The military greatneſs of France, the joint reſult of the revolution and the moſt unfortunate of all wars, is not, as many people hope, a tranſitory meteor. It is thoroughly interwoven with the eſſential principles of the French republic; it is a fundamental part of its conſtitution, its politics and government; and is ſo inſeparably connected with its character and exiſtence, that a ceſſation of this military preponderance, and the total diſſolution of the republic, may be ſaid to be ſynonimous. Amidſt the ſtorms of the laſt ten years, the French nation has become entirely military; it has cultivated the art of war at the expenſe of every other: accuſtomed to victory, the ambition

tion of military fame is now the characteriſtic feature, the uſe of arms the ordinary occupation, and war the natural element of the French. Even the internal ſolidity of their preſent conſtitution depends entirely upon the conſtant predominance of a military force: nothing but a military government (which, however, need not be tyrannical) can coerce and reſtrain a people who have loſt every element of polity, and every principle of peaceful ſubordination in the convulſions of a ten years revolution; among whom force is become the only meaſure of authority, and anarchy the only ſubſtitute of law and order. When in ſuch a ſtate the ſprings of military power are relaxed, the decline and ruin of the civil conſtitution are at hand. The ſlighteſt view of the ſubject muſt convince any man, whether friend or enemy, that the capacities, inclinations, habits, characters, and intereſts of her preſent rulers will juſtify no other concluſion.

If to this military power, this extenſive territory, this unlimited control of ſo many nations; if to all the former and preſent advantages of France, we add the terror which ſhe has ſpread around her, and which is now the predominant ſentiment of Europe: is there in the whole extent of the continent, a nation capable of maintaining, alone, a conteſt with ſuch a power? I ſhall ſpare myſelf the melancholy taſk

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of entering minutely into the diſcuſſion of this truth, and of developing all its painful conſequences. The diſproportion is clear and evident to every ſpectator: the hiſtory of the war of the revolution, and particularly of the campaigns of 1799 and 1800, is one continued and incontrovertible comment upon it. I ſay nothing of extraordinary conjunctures: I will not ſay that ſome new power may not be formed, ſome great genius may not ariſe hereafter, to avenge afflicted Europe of the mortifications ſhe has received from victorious France; but the preſent ſtate of affairs, the natural courſe of things, and the uſual eſtimation of ſtrength, encourage no ſuch proſpect. No nation on the continent, unleſs compelled by the neceſſity of ſelf-defence, would ſingly hazard a war with France. If, therefore, it be yet poſſible to check her inordinate aſcendant, and recover the balance of Europe, there muſt be a counterpoiſe formed by a combination of ſeveral powers. But ſhould a nearer examination diſplay inſurmountable difficulties in the way of ſuch a confederacy; ſhould the poſſibility of its exiſtence or the efficacy of its operation be highly dubious; the anſwer, though a very comfortleſs one, will then readily be found to the queſtion; "What guaranty does there now exiſt of our federal conſtitution?"

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In the firſt place, it can hardly be diſputed that AUSTRIA or PRUSSIA muſt be principally engaged in every effectual coalition againſt France. The other powers of Europe can never combat her aſcendant, but in concert with one or both of theſe, by their means, and as their allies. Suppoſing Ruſſia able to cope ſingly with France, yet they have no immediate point of contact, and the immenſe intervening ſpace renders all active operations between them impoſſible, unleſs ſome more neighbouring nation ſhould ſide with Ruſſia. Beſides, however dangerous France may become to the ſafety and independence of her neighbours, it never can be the intereſt of Ruſſia to ſtand up alone in oppoſition to plans, of which ſhe muſt neceſſarily be the laſt to feel the effects. The power of Ruſſia, if ever again it be engaged in a war with France, will act no other part than that of an auxiliary. England, whenever it interferes in the concerns of the continent, muſt do the ſame. If France were bent upon ſubduing the whole continent, England alone could not prevent it: England can only act againſt her as an auxiliary in a general war, in concert with Auſtria or Pruſſia, or both of them.

The whole queſtion therefore, concerning the ſtability of the preſent federal ſyſtem, is reduced to this: How far are Auſtria and Pruſſia enabled

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to protect themſelves and the nations connected with them, againſt the power of France? Before the revolution, ſuch a queſtion would have been eaſily anſwered. The power of Auſtria had been a counterpoiſe to that of France ſince the beginning of the ſixteenth century; ſometimes alone, ſometimes in alliance with others, Auſtria had often counteracted the attempts of herancient rival in Germany and Italy. The ultimate reſult of all their wars, was indeed in favour of France; for if we contemplate the period that elapſed between that epoch and the year 1740, we find that ſhe had conſiderably enlarged her poſſeſſions in the Netherlands and on the banks of the Rhine, and had ſeated princes of the Houſe of Bourbon on two Italian thrones. But the foundations of the Auſtrian monarchy had never been ſhaken by France before the year 1740. All the plans of Lewis XIV. were baffled by the great alliances with England and Holland, which Auſtria ſucceſsfully oppoſed to them; and at the treaty of Utrecht the Imperial provinces remained entire; the Empire retainedall its ancient bulwarks from the Alps to the North Sea.

An important change took place in the ſituation of Auſtria after the year 1740. The elevation of the Houſe of Brandenburg gave a new form to the Empire. Till then it had been di-

vided into a number of great and ſmall ſtates, who took part with or againſt Auſtria in her ſeveral wars, according to the intereſts or politics of their ſovereigns. But when Pruſſia became a great and independent ſtate, the centre as it were of a ſyſtem formed by its new powers of attraction in the north of Germany; the intereſts of the Empire began in many important reſpects to be diſtinguiſhed—the north from the ſouth. The Empire was from that time divided into two parts, ſtrongly connected with each other by a multiplicity of intereſts, but entirely diſtinct in the moſt eſſential points of their federal politics.

This new ſyſtem was far from agreeable to the private intereſts of Auſtria; but conſidered in an enlarged point of view, it could not be but generally advantageous. There was only one caſe poſſible in which ſuch a ſyſtem could be dangerous to Europe, and eſpecially to Germany; and of that caſe there was not the ſmalleſt probability till the French revolution. The ſchiſm in the Empire could have no pernicious conſequence, unleſs the aſcendant of France were ſuch as to require its united forces to oppoſe her. So long as France remained in her former ſtate, ſo long as either Auſtria or Pruſſia, with their occaſional allies, formed a ſufficient counterpoiſe to her power, the balance and ſecurity of Europe were unſhaken;

unſhaken; and Germany and Europe enjoyed the beneficial effects of the altered conſtitution of the Empire, without experiencing, or even apprehending that miſchief, which could only, under the above circumſtances, reſult from it.

Two great examples have demonſtrated the efficacy of that ſyſtem: in the war for the ſucceſſion of Charles VI. Auſtria, abandoned by almoſt every other power, ſtood alone againſt France and her numerous allies; and maintained the conteſt with dignity and vigour. Pruſſia ſtood engaged with one half of Europe, in the ſeven years war, and ſupported her cauſe with honour and effect. Even the thirty years alliance between France and Auſtria, produced by the treaty of 1756, was never ſufficiently powerful to threaten the independence of the north of Germany with ſerious danger. Had France ſo far departed from all the principles of rational policy, as to threaten Pruſſia and her allies, by means of this connexion, had Auſtria been blind enough to aſſiſt, even tacitly, in ſuch an undertaking, the north of Germany, in itſelf neither weak nor deſtitute of reſources, would have found ſupport in the aſſiſtance of England and Ruſſia. The profound peace enjoyed by Germany, unbroken but by the campaign of 1778, and even that campaign itſelf, ſufficiently prove, that the conſtitution of the Empire

Empire contained complete proviſion for the ſafety and integrity of the whole and every part, againſt all foreign or internal dangers.

But this ſtate of diviſion neceſſarily preſented the greateſt advantages to France as the enemy of Germany, when unforeſeen, unnatural revolutions had given her ſuch a preponderance as to require the united forces of the Empire to oppoſe her. Now that ſhe has overthrown every bulwark of Germany, cruſhed the independence of the intermediate countries, eſtabliſhed her ſway in Holland, in the Netherlands, on the left bank of the Rhine, in Switzerland, and in Upper Italy; now that ſhe has even razed the few fortreſſes that remained on the right bank of the Rhine; a campaign in Germany will be an enterpriſe of no hazard or difficulty for the French armies. Within eight days from the commencement of hoſtilities, the theatre of the war will be in the heart of the Empire. The immediate object of the invaſion will not, as formerly, be attacked on this or that particular ſide, but in every part at once. If the reſt of the Empire is neutral, it will ſpeedily be ſurrounded. The firſt advantage of the enemy then opens him a way into the territories of the principal ſtates. A deſtructive and deciſive conteſt is commenced in the very heart of their dominions; the loſs of every battle is followed

lowed by ſuch incalculable danger, leads to ſuch dreadful conſequences, as take away all courage to reſiſt; the leſſer evil is eagerly ſubmitted to, in order to eſcape from a more terrible misfortune; and ruin, apparently inevitable, is averted by an ignominious peace. Such will be the event of every war in Germany, ſo long as the preſent ſyſtem ſhall endure.

If it be yet poſſible to preſerve the independence and ſecurity of Germany (whoſe frontiers are now defenceleſs and unprotected) againſt France, with all her late conqueſts, her enormous extent of territory, her conſolidated military ſtrength, and her abſolute control of Holland, Italy, and Switzerland; it can only be effected by a junction of all the powers of the Empire. Such an union cannot be produced without a good underſtanding between the two principal ſtates. Is that to be expected? This queſtion involves, to all appearance, the future fate of Germany, and that of Europe alſo, ſince Europe can only reſiſt the preponderance of France, by means of Germany.

Since Pruſſia has ranked among the principal powers of Europe; ſince more than half a century, Auſtria and Pruſſia have appeared two hoſtile ſtars that threaten the whole political ſyſtem with

ſubverſion

ſubverſion and ruin, whenever their orbits interfered. We have ſeen them involved in bloody wars, engaged inceſſantly in plans for weakening each other; ever vigilant, ever in alarm, each jealous of the efforts or advancement of its rival. They were allied during a ſhort time againſt an evil of a moſt extraordinary nature; againſt a moſt formidable and univerſal danger: but even this alliance ſowed the ſeeds of freſh diſcord, and produced new and apparently juſtifiable grounds of perpetual diviſion. The impoſſibility of their acting in concert, even when called upon by the greateſt and moſt preſſing danger, the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſacred motives; this lamentable impoſſibility, the ſource of ſuch deplorable misfortunes, has furniſhed the completeſt proof of an irreconcilable antipathy, and annihilated, not only every hope of the preſent, but, for thoſe who ſee deeply into things, every hope of the future.

If this inveterate hatred were only the effect of paſſion, opinion, and prejudice, an enlightened ſtateſman would not conſider it inſurmountable; and, ſo far as it only reſts upon ſuch grounds, we may always entertain a hope of ſeeing, if not perfect harmony, at leaſt a ſuſpenſion of diſcordant meaſures between them; a temporary agreement for a common object, and confidence and

unanimity in the purſuit of it. That the common notions concerning natural antipathies between governments and nations, are by no means unfounded, has been incontrovertibly proved by many deplorable examples; but that theſe antipathies ſhould have no bounds, is rejected by ſound policy, becauſe condemned by ſound reaſon. Whenever a real intereſt commands, every national antipathy, though exiſting from the earlieſt times, if it only reſts upon prejudice, muſt yield to more urgent motives; and ſo it doubtleſs will, when the guidance of nations is intruſted to the wiſe and great; to men who are above all narrow views, and ſuperior to all little paſſions. The deliberate and decided meaſures of a truly enlightened government, intent upon important objects, break through the fetters of popular opinion, are ſupported by the wiſe, and carry the weak irreſiſtibly along; thus often extinguiſhing, in one fortunate moment, whole ages of national prejudice.

But in the caſe before us, the evil is more deeply rooted. The antipathy between Auſtria and Pruſſia is not founded upon a blind ſentiment of averſion, jealouſy, or miſtruſt; is not merely the effect of long habit, or the bitter remembrance of mutual injuries. It is connected with more deep and

and eſſential cauſes. It has hitherto been a fundamental principle of European politics, and, under certain limitations, muſt always continue ſo. Theſe two powers are evidently deſtined to balance each other; that is their political calling, the neceſſary rule of their whole political conduct. Setting entirely aſide all private hatred, all jealouſy and animoſity (which ſhould always be excluded from the higher views of politics and government), there muſt ever remain in their relations, in the nature and objects of their activity, and in the very principle of their exiſtence, a fixed and unalterable cauſe, not of natural or political enmity, but of natural and political oppoſition. They are compelled to counteract each other; how could they then in the common courſe of things be permanently allied? This neceſſary ſtate of oppoſition was evidently conducive to the welfare of Europe, as long as its ancient conſtitution and relations endured, without being detrimental to thoſe powers themſelves, provided it was not ſuffered to exceed the bounds of true policy. Till France arrived at her preſent greatneſs, the ſyſtematic enmity of Auſtria and Pruſſia rather added to the ſecurity than to the dangers of Europe; their conduct was in uniſon with the principles of legitimate politics; and if we maturely weigh the effects of a cloſe connexion between them, we muſt confeſs, that, had

it been poſſible, it would have been by no means deſirable.

But ſince the total change which has taken place; ſince the French revolution has ſubverted every foundation of the federal ſyſtem; ſince France has attained a preponderance againſt which every ancient guarantee of the equilibrium is but as a rotten pillar to a falling building; from that time, this once beneficial oppoſition is converted into a cauſe of the general weakneſs, and (it cannot be concealed) of the general ruin. Though an alliance between Auſtria and Pruſſia continue to be as unnatural and impracticable as heretofore, yet it affords the only means of protection and defence to Germany; there is no other chance of its preſervation in the general wreck of Europe. This alone is a ſtrong proof of the malignancy and danger of the preſent political criſis, and of the magnitude of our misfortunes: for as the means of preſerving the laſt remains of the political ſyſtem, are difficult, extraordinary, and unnatural; even ſo ſevere and extraordinary muſt be the ſhock which has diſordered it.

It is among the moſt unfortunate peculiarities of this caſe, that every confederacy of the leading powers of Germany, though called for and cemented by the ſtrongeſt neceſſity, muſt neceſ-

ſarily be conceived and executed in the ſpirit of a coalition, and not of an alliance. The fundamental contrariety in the principles and objects of their politics, will continue the ſame under any circumſtances; and muſt indeed return whenever the general balance is re-eſtabliſhed, and the federal ſyſtem ſecured upon its former baſis. This union, therefore, can never be other than tranſient; which is the whole ſecret, the perpetual and neceſſary cauſe of its weakneſs. Such would be the uncertainty of a combination of theſe heterogeneous parts, that the forced and unſteady alliance might be diſſolved, and all its operations ſuſpended in the moſt critical and deciſive moment. It is a matter of doubt whether the ſeparate reſiſtance of each ſtate, with all its neceſſary diſadvantages, would not be preferable to ſuch a coalition.

If, moreover, the inordinate aſcendant of France were to create an alliance between Auſtria and Pruſſia, as the only means of reſiſting it, a general coalition would, in all political probability, be the conſequence. For England and Ruſſia would always take part with Auſtria or Pruſſia; and in the preſent ſtate of Europe, every power of the ſecond and third order would be more or leſs concerned with them. Thus a league between Auſtria and Pruſſia may always be con-

ſidered as a coalition of Europe. The want of ſuch a one (all the politicians of Europe will not ſuppreſs this truth), the want of ſuch a coalition againſt France will often be felt and acknowledged: but the conviction of its neceſſity will be accompanied by the juſt apprehenſion of its inſufficiency. It would require a rare conjunction of great and extraordinary characters to organize, direct, and contain ſuch a coalition, and to conduct it ſucceſsfully to the object of its original deſtination. Experience has taught us this: the dreadful leſſon is yet freſh in the memory of humbled Europe; and who now among the rulers of nations will venture to encounter a ſecond?

Thus far is certain at all events: the political ſyſtem cannot but be extremely defective, when it contains ſuch a diſproportion of power as nothing but a general league can rectify. And when even that difficult, dangerous, and almoſt deſperate remedy does not promiſe certain ſucceſs, does not afford even rational hopes of it, the exiſtence of any thing like equilibrium muſt be quite out of the queſtion.

I will here briefly recapitulate the foregoing obſervations, and preſent the following reſults of this view of the preſent relations between France and

and Europe; which, though indeed only my individual opinion, is founded throughout upon facts.

1ſt. France has extended her limits on all ſides by military or revolutionary operations. She has deſtroyed the independence of the neighbouring ſtates, either by regular conqueſt, as in the caſe of Flanders, Savoy, the Rhine lands, &c. or under colour of alliance, as with Holland, Spain, Switzerland, and the Italian republics; or finally, by the right of power only, as in the ſubjection of all Italy as far as the Adige. The ancient conſtitutions of all theſe countries have been demoliſhed, and France has eſtabliſhed an empire upon their ruins, which has no parallel in Europe.

2dly. This total obliteration of her former limits, this deſtruction of every ſafeguard of her neighbours; this military force, alike extraordinary in extent and efficacy, and far exceeding even her territorial aggrandizement in proportion; theſe have given a preponderance to France, againſt which no continental power, not even the greateſt, can contend with any chance of ſucceſs.

3dly. Were France to abuſe this prodigious preponderance, and, not content with her preſent acquiſitions, were ſhe to preſcribe too hard

conditions to the reſt of Europe, a general league would be the only means of reſiſting the danger.

4thly. Such is the geographical, military, and political ſituation of France, that no league againſt her could be in the leaſt effectual, in which Auſtria or Pruſſia, or both, are not engaged.

5thly. In every future war of Auſtria or Pruſſia ſeparately againſt France, the probability of victory (to ſay no more) is on the ſide of the latter: and even the alliance of either with a third ſtate, would not form a counterpoiſe to France, if the other remained neuter; they could, at the moſt, only leſſen the diſproportion *.

6thly. Auſtria and Pruſſia muſt therefore act in concert, to afford a hope of effectual protection to Germany in any future war.

7thly. But an intimate alliance between thoſe two powers, is the moſt improbable, the moſt difficult of all political combinations. Thus vaniſhes the baſis of every federative guarantee againſt France, as ſoon as we have diſcovered it.

8thly. In the whole ſphere of federal relations there is no alliance (in the common acceptation of the word) that can form a counterpoiſe to

* Vide Note D D.

France.

France. This can only be accompliſhed by the means always dangerous and uncertain, of a coalition, whenever the neceſſity of an active reſiſtance ſhall ariſe: and as every coalition againſt France muſt be general (becauſe the whole of Germany, and conſequently all the allies of the leading powers of the Empire muſt neceſſarily be engaged in it); ſo the only refuge that remains to Europe againſt France, is the moſt dangerous, the moſt uncertain, the moſt intricate and difficult of all political meaſures.

I am aware of ſome objections likely to be made to this reaſoning in general (whoſe intrinſic conſiſtency, I think, will hardly be impeached), and will anſwer them beforehand.

On the one hand, it will be ſaid (ſuch are the topics of conſolation moſt frequently held forth), "To what purpoſe are all theſe melancholy calculations? What is the uſe of thus reckoning and balancing remote dangers againſt hypothetical remedies? The ſpeculations of politics are as hills of ſand, whoſe ſhape and figure vary every inſtant with the winds of heaven. What aſſurance have we that a few years, nay, a few months, may not put an end to this preponderance of France, ſo frightfully deſcribed to us? The genius of a few enterpriſing minds, the genius of one

one man, raiſed that nation from the depth of ruin to its preſent greatneſs and ſtability. That which depends upon an uncertain life, muſt be itſelf uncertain. Even now, perhaps, while you are bewailing her aſcendancy, France is ſinking once more into an abyſs of anarchy and confuſion, or loſing, in the hands of a weak and incapable government, that bold and energetic character, which has more contributed to deſtroy the balance of Europe than any eſſential advantages of her preſent geographical, military, and federative poſition. Even if this ſhould not be the caſe, who will warrant that the ſprings of this coloſſal machine may not relax in conſequence of their very nature; and even though managed by the moſt ſkilful artiſts, wear out and become uſeleſs in the courſe of time? Take from France her military ſpirit, diſcipline, and enthuſiaſm, (and where is it written that they muſt be eternal, becauſe created in a moment by extraordinary circumſtances?) and what becomes of her power? Her extent of territory, her conqueſts, her tributary republics, her immenſe population, will all be converted into a weight to haſten her downfall whenever the vital principle in the centre ſhall fail. And is then the reſt of Europe for ever deprived of courage and genius, of great and energetic plans, and of ability to execute them? A ſingle extraordinary

extraordinary genius, one great and decided character, might reverſe the whole ſyſtem, and take from France the weight that now oppreſſes Europe, to throw it into an oppoſite ſcale. Perhaps in the midſt of your complaints of its intolerable preponderance, the moment may unexpectedly arrive, when the French nation will be deprived of its juſt and beneficial influence; and you will have to lament, that, by an exaggerated deſcription of the preſent danger, you have contributed to a loſs ſo great and detrimental to the general intereſts."

To this I anſwer: Politics, ſpeculative as well as practicable, have to do with no elements but ſuch as actually exiſt; and when they look forward to the future, their calculations muſt always reſt upon preſent realities, and not upon accidental or perſonal circumſtances, upon empty hypotheſes or mere poſſibilities. The probability of the long or ſhort duration of the preſent ſtate of France, her military and political aſcendant, is a ſubject of ſpeculation and reflection for the politician. But whatever the reſult (merely hypothetical and conditional) of his reſearches, it cannot affect the indiſputable truth, that at preſent there is no proſpect but of *power* to France and *danger* to the reſt of Europe.

Should

Should France ſuddenly fall, or gradually decline, we would draw new concluſions from new premiſes; ſhould ſhe, however improbable it may appear, deſcend even beneath her juſt level, and loſe her proper and neceſſary ſhare of power—the principle of her preſervation; ſhould the ſafety of Europe be threatened from ſome other ſide with dangers now hardly to be underſtood or imagined; thoſe who ſurvive ſuch changes would learn how to accommodate their ſyſtems, principles, doctrines, and, where it is neceſſary to act, their meaſures accordingly. But ſo long as the preſent relations endure, all ſyſtems, principles, doctrines, and meaſures muſt be built upon theſe; and as long as Europe on the one hand, and France on the other, continue as they now ſtand, in this firſt year of the nineteenth century, it muſt be permitted to aſſert, that there exiſts no federal conſtitution, no balance of power, no ſolid and durable peace.

On the other hand, I ſhall meet with objections of a different, and perhaps more ſpecious nature. "A revolution has been accompliſhed in the political ſyſtem. This might have been prevented, and the former ſyſtem preſerved with all its defects, if the ſtrength of Europe, more firmly united, had been more efficaciouſly directed. But the paſt cannot be undone; the preſent

preſent and the future only ſhould occupy the ſcience of politics. Why are they both repreſented ſo comfortleſs? There never exiſted a balance of power in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word; there always have been preponderating ſtates: the weak have always been obnoxious to danger; there always have been pretexts for oppreſſion, occaſions for injuſtice, and ſubjects of war in Europe. Suppoſing the aſcendancy acquired by France to be as you deſcribe it, does it follow that all ſecurity, liberty, independence, and ſtability muſt be annihilated for ever in the reſt of Europe? Will not France ceaſe to be dangerous to other nations from the very circumſtance of her having nothing more to wiſh for, nothing more to undertake? What is there now to call forth her exertions? Every new conqueſt would be a burden to the republic; every new conqueſt would diminiſh her ſtrength. Will ſhe go forth upon unprofitable adventures beyond the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrennees? Or, will ſhe exterminate kingdoms which ſhe cannot govern? The mere poſſibility of an abuſe of power, of a wanton exaggeration of pretenſions, will not juſtify ſuppoſitions of ſo hateful a nature, ſuch unfounded and chimerical apprehenſions. If the former revolutionary governments were the terror of Europe by their unprincipled ambition, their inſatiable avarice,

their

their unbounded immorality; yet the preſent government is formed, in every reſpect, to diſſipate the ſtorm, to tranquillize all minds, and to awaken ſentiments of confidence and ſecurity in all other nations. It aims at no farther aggrandizement; ſeeks only to maintain its poſſeſſions as it found them, and is deſirous of living in peace with its neighbours and the whole world; faithful to the principles of the law of nations, a powerful protector of its allies, and an example of juſtice, equity, and moderation to its enemies. If it continues to adhere to ſuch principles, why ſhould not Europe be happy and ſecure in her preſent ſituation? Let us forget the paſt; let every ſtate conform with prudent reſignation to its preſent circumſtances; let each improve its preſent advantages, and renounce all deſtructive ambition, all unnatural and extravagant ſyſtems, all falſe and turbulent politics. The great powers of Europe, whoſe broad and ſolid foundations reſiſted the torrent of the revolution, are ſtill powerful enough to defy every wanton attack, to cultivate and improve their ſtates by peaceful economy, to make their ſubjects happy, and to maintain their political dignity. The reſt is all error and illuſion; whether a certain number of little ſovereigns, or one great republican power, give laws beyond the Rhine, the Meuſe, and the Adige,

Adige, muſt be matter of indifference to the reſt of Europe, ſince the ancient poſſeſſors are expelled, and the former conſtitutions aboliſhed. Auſtria, Pruſſia, Ruſſia, England, and the powers of a ſecond and third order, and every thing that yet remains of the former ſyſtem, will not the leſs proſper and endure on that account: and if theſe changes have indeed irreparably ſubverted the ancient federal ſyſtem, what ſhall prevent you from erecting a new edifice with new materials?"

The following obſervations will anſwer theſe arguments; the ſtrongeſt which any advocate for the preſent ſtate of Europe, any defender of the aſcendancy of France, can oppoſe to the juſt apprehenſions of the world, and reaſonable warnings of political ſpeculation.

1ſt. Whether the preſent government of France deſerve the unlimited confidence required by its partiſans, is not within the ſphere of my preſent inquiry. I once more ſolemnly diſclaim all regard to perſonal conſideration. I even go farther, and willingly concede whatever is not immediately neceſſary to my object, that I may thereby tread firmer upon the grounds where I mean to build conviction. I therefore entirely renounce all arguments deducible

ducible from the character of the preſent government; which ſhall be ſuppoſed in all its principles, opinions, plans, and meaſures, the reverſe of that which it ſucceeded. We will conſider it as only deſirous of concord and peace, of ſecurity and juſtice; as hitherto guiltleſs of any proceeding calculated to juſtify our former apprehenſions, or to excite new ones, to inſpire miſtruſt, or to ſuppreſs reviving hopes: to grant this is ſurely the extreme of moderation.

2dly. But the character of the preſent French government is no ſecurity for the future. It is a leading maxim in every rational ſyſtem of practicable politics, that every power is dangerous to the reſt, which poſſeſſes the means of diſturbing the general peace, and wants nothing but the will to uſe them. If we depart from this maxim, we no longer find any fixed point whatever in the whole ſphere of politics; there remains nothing then but vague ſuppoſitions and wavering hypotheſes, uncertain opinions of perſonal characters, and looſe probabilities, which one moment preſents, and the following deſtroys.

3dly. As the perſonal character of the preſent government of France, or indeed of any government

government whatever, cannot enſure the diſpoſitions of its ſucceſſors; as even the preſent wiſhes, acts, and declarations of a ſovereign, are no ſecurity for his intentions and proceedings at a future period; even ſo do the obvious intereſts of a power afford no perfect aſſurance of its views and conduct. This obſervation muſt, however, only be taken in a limited ſenſe. In the ordinary courſe of things the true intereſts of a nation are no inadequate criterion of the conduct which in all reaſonable probability we are to expect from it, while there is a due balance of power, or a conſtitution in which it is nearly balanced; when there is no danger of an immediate revolution, and no ſtate ſufficiently preponderant to effect a ſudden ſubverſion of the whole ſyſtem. For it may always be ſuppoſed, that in any given period, as of fifty or an hundred years, the wiſe and imprudent counſels by which it is directed, will at leaſt counterbalance each other; that the principles of its real welfare, though for a time forgotten, will always be recurred to; and that, on the whole, its true intereſt will be the leading object of the government. The politician will therefore generally be right in his concluſions, who makes the intereſt of each ſtate a principal ground of every ſpeculation concerning its future conduct *. But

* Vide Note EE.

this maxim ceaſes to be uſeful in times when the ſtate of Europe may be altered in a moment by a ſingle reſolution. When any power attains ſo great a degree of influence and preponderance in the political ſyſtem, that the ſlighteſt deviations of its politics may endanger all exiſting relations, and threaten a general ſubverſion; it would be madneſs to diſmiſs every apprehenſion, and continue in perfect ſecurity, becauſe war and conqueſt may be oppoſite to the permanent intereſts of that nation. For who will venture to aſſure us, that the men intruſted with this extraordinary power, will never give way to the impulſe of ambition, avarice, or reſentment, and gratify the paſſions of the moment, regardleſs of thoſe permanent intereſts? This would be ſufficient, in the preſent ſtate of Europe, to produce the moſt extenſive deſolation.

4thly. When we conſider the preſent ſtate of France, and what ſhe has experienced during the laſt ten years, we ſhall find it difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to determine what maxims and conduct her intereſts will conſtantly preſcribe to her. Self-preſervation is naturally the firſt object of every government. Where that is beſt ſecured by pacific meaſures, and an adherence to the principles of moderation and juſtice, there juſtice and moderation will prevail.

vail. But when circumſtances require a contrary conduct, and a government feels itſelf obliged to aſſume a lofty and decided tone, and engage in great and ſplendid undertakings, to ſupport its ſinking popularity, to counteract an aſpiring faction, or to awe the turbulence of a ſeditious people; then moderation is ſacrificed to the intereſts of the moment; and who will be found bold enough to deny that the French government may poſſibly be thus circumſtanced? Does not every thing about that government indicate the probability of critical ſituations, frequent changes, and a long ſtate of uncertainty?

But ſhould the preſent and every future government of France invariably renounce all views of uſurpation, and make moderation the leading principle of its politics; ſhould its intereſts be conſtantly averſe to wars of conqueſt, plunder, and oppreſſion; and ſhould theſe doubtful poſitions be verified in the moſt ſatisfactory manner; yet the relations between France and the reſt of Europe would not therefore be leſs unequal, conſtrained, and dangerous. For, beſides the diſputes ariſing from ambition, avarice, or wanton provocations among nations; there are differences of another nature, which originate in the doubtfulneſs of

their rights, the inſufficiency of their treaties, and the often unavoidable concurrence of their ſeveral intereſts. Theſe diſputes, and the wars, which, in extreme caſes, are the only means of deciding them, will never ceaſe to occur, while there are ſeparate ſtates, without a perfect ſyſtem of public law among them. But theſe unavoidable wars muſt, in the preſent ſituation of Europe, be productive of the moſt dreadful miſfortunes. The ſlighteſt miſunderſtanding about an undefined boundary, a doubtful right of ſovereignty or navigation (not to mention the greater ones, that might in time ariſe by the deceaſe of princes about the right of ſucceſſion), the ſlighteſt difference between France and any neighbouring ſtate, would, on account of the immenſe preponderance of the French power, raiſe ſuch a ſtorm as to threaten all Europe with deſtruction. The dictates of ſound policy preſcribe the neceſſity of a natural or artificial balance of power; not only to prevent the wanton and dangerous abuſe of it on the part of a preponderating ſtate; but even to maintain a due proportion of ſtrength in thoſe ordinary wars, which human wiſdom is often unable to avert, and to preſerve the political ſyſtem from ſhocks that might prove fatal to its exiſtence. Whenever this balance is deſtroyed, the ſecurity of the whole is immediately annihilated, whether the

the maxims that govern each particular ſtate be juſt or unjuſt, warlike or pacific.

6thly. In the preſent ſtate of things, there is a conſtant ſource of political diſturbance, a perpetual cauſe of war, in the neceſſary diſpoſition of the humbled and oppreſſed nations, in their unextinguiſhable reſentment towards their haughty and oppreſſive conqueror. It would betray the groſſeſt ignorance of human nature to expect that nations, ſubdued and trampled on by France; that princes ſtripped of their provinces and revenues, their rank and ſplendour, and ſubjected to the moſt humiliating conditions; that ſo many minds afflicted by the ſevereſt loſſes, and iritated by the moſt contemptuous inſults, ſhould in a moment throw a veil of oblivion upon the paſt, forget their ſufferings, diſpel their ſorrows, and ſubmit, with patient reſignation, to the yoke of France.—Every rational obſerver of the ordinary courſe of human ſentiments and paſſions muſt expect the very reverſe. Until the power of France ſhall again be reduced to its juſt proportion in the ſyſtem of Europe, the prevailing ſentiment in all other countries, or at leaſt in the principal European ſtates, will be a ſecret deſire of thwarting her preponderance; a ſecret and inſurmountable hatred of that monopoly of in-

fluence and dominion which France has ſo victoriouſly aſſerted. They will ſuffer in ſilence ſo long as they continue to feel the impoſſibility of any effectual remedy. But new exertions and attempts, new wars and coalitions, will be formed upon the firſt hope of a ſucceſsful iſſue, whether founded upon reviving courage and the animating conſciouſneſs of their own increaſed ſtrength, or upon ſymptoms of diſorder, diſſenſion, and weakneſs in the interior of France. An unnatural and oppreſſive conſtitution, incompatible with the ſafety and dignity of Europe in general, can have no proſpect of duration. The indeſtructible elaſticity of ſprings too forcibly compreſſed, will always tend to reſtore their natural ſtate. All the treaties in the world cannot confirm and preſerve a ſtate of things repugnant to every principle of freedom, to all equality of power, to the fundamental laws of the ſocial and federal conſtitution, to the wiſhes, propenſities, and views of the great majority of nations and individuals *.

7thly. Should any man deny the force or truth of all theſe arguments, and aſſert, in contradiction to experience, to the evidence of the paſt and preſent, and to the true principles

* Vide Note F F.

of

of politics, that neither the mutability of the views and characters of the rulers of France, nor the uncertainty of their future diſpoſitions, nor the chance of their private intereſts being incompatible with the general intereſt and peace of Europe, nor the danger with which even an ordinary war would threaten all Europe when there is no balance of power, nor the natural and inſurmountable propenſity to diſſolve unnatural obligations—ſhould he aſſert, that none of theſe cauſes of diſſenſion, enmity, and war, are ſufficiently active and important to juſtify the apprehenſions here entertained; and that, notwithſtanding all theſe obvious ſources of perpetual internal diſcord, the conſtitution eſtabliſhed by the French revolution, and the events of its unhappy war, may endure in peace and harmony, as well as the former or any other political combination; he muſt at leaſt allow, that ſuch a conſtitution does not deſerve the appellation of a federative ſyſtem, either in the former, or any other proper acceptation of the words. He muſt be prepared to aſſert, that the balance of power, as hitherto conceived, is only an empty term; that Europe can exiſt and proſper under circumſtances different from thoſe formerly held neceſſary and eſſential to it; and that federative policy is in future to proceed upon new and unheard-of principles, in utter

contradiction to all which prevailed before, and hitherto unconfirmed by any experience. According to all former grounds of judgment, all ancient rule of conduct in politics, the preſent ſituation of Europe is a ſtate of political anarchy, of conſtant and unextinguiſhable war. Thoſe who maintain the contrary, muſt either renounce all conſiſtency, or diſclaim every principle hitherto received.

Theſe remarks on the preſent relations between France and Europe, are totally uninfluenced by hatred or prejudice againſt the French republic. They flow from a free and impartial conſideration of the ſubject, from the real ſtate and natural courſe of things, and from an unconſtrained application of the ſimpleſt rules of the ſcience of politics. Every enlightened friend of the French nation muſt as readily ſubſcribe to them, as the bittereſt enemy of France, or the moſt determined adverſary of her preſent conſtitution: It is a characteriſtic property of all great diſorders in the political ſyſtem, that they do as much injury to the ſtates apparently benefited by the deſtruction of the balance, as to the immediate loſers by the diſproportion introduced. It is the true and permanent intereſt of every nation without exception, to preſerve a due proportion between its own ſtrength, and that of its neighbours; and

to

to maintain a juſt diſtribution of power among all the members of the federative ſyſtem. The advantages of a dangerous aſcendancy are always deceitful; for the public welfare of a nation cannot be ſecure, without the ſatisfaction of its neighbours, and the confidence of the world. An enlightened policy requires a due attention to theſe important requiſites of peace, on the part of the greateſt as well as the ſmalleſt ſtates. Were France to diſtinguiſh her true intereſts; were the voice of reaſon to prevail above the dictates of ambition and avarice; her ſtateſmen would eaſily be convinced, that what now is called, by a ſhameleſs abuſe of words, the federative ſyſtem of Europe, is nothing but a compound of inordinate power on the one hand, and impotence on the other; in which no real independence, no ſtability or ſecurity, and no permanent peace can exiſt; and which is conſequently incompatible with the general welfare.

I have freely declared my opinion of the preſent ſtate of Europe. I have not ſuppreſſed the difficulties which I conceive inſeparably connected with every attempt to eſtabliſh a better ſyſtem, amidſt our preſent diſaſters—the fortune of the preſent, and perhaps the dowry of future generations. I have pourtrayed the evil at full length, ſuch as I beheld it. It is for the practical politician

tician to find the moſt effectual remedies for the diſorders of ſociety ; the writer has done his duty when he has ſhown their exiſtence and origin. In one caſe, however, he may go farther: if another writer, whether authorized or not, has made propoſals to the public, he may inquire into and examine them. In one of the principal chapters of his work, the Author of *l'Etat de la France* has given us the baſis of a new federal ſyſtem; for he does not doubt the deſtruction of the old one. This may therefore with propriety be made a ſubject of public diſcuſſion ; and I ſhall now proceed to examine it.

CHAP. II.

Of the Relations between France and her Allies.

IT is the opinion of our Author that in future every political alliance ſhould be founded on the two following rules:

1ſt, " In peace it ſhould guarantee the continuance of ſubſiſting relations, and in war it ſhould provide for the defence of thoſe relations againſt the common enemy." 2dly, " It ſhould ſecure the political intereſts of the continent both

in peace and war, againſt the immoderate aſcendant of the maritime powers *."

Sad indeed is the proſpect for the federal ſyſtem of Europe, if ſuch principles are to be made the foundations of all future alliances. How can they anſwer that purpoſe, when they do not define any, much leſs all the conditions of an uſeful alliance? The ſlighteſt glance will convince us that theſe pretended general rules are perfectly futile either in practicable or ſpeculative politics.

1ſt. "That every alliance ſhould guarantee the continuance of exiſting relations in peace, and provide for their defence in war," is (if it be not mere tautology) nothing more than a verbal enunciation of the general object of all alliances, by no means a rule whereby the ſcience of politics can form or approve any particular engagement. Every alliance is doubtleſs intended ſomehow to maintain ſubſiſting relations: but what relations ought to be the objects of ſuch conventions? that is the queſtion. The vague and undefined poſitions of the Author are far from aſcertaining this point; and indeed only ſerve to divert our attention from every inquiry leading to an explanation of it. His principles would induce us to conclude that the *nature* of the rela-

* Vide Note G G.

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tions ſubſiſting, is a matter of no conſideration; that nothing more is requiſite than to provide for their *duration*. But ſound policy will not reſort to means of preſerving and perpetuating them, till it has firſt examined if they be worth preſerving. It would indeed be a fit maxim for a power giving laws to all Europe, that only ſuch alliances ſhould be reckoned juſt and uſeful, as afforded freſh guarantees and new inſtruments of its own tyranny. But when we ſpeak of general principles, we muſt take a more liberal view of the ſubject; which would lead to the concluſion, that when the exiſting relations are clearly detrimental to the welfare of Europe, or to the independence and ſecurity of any nation, the moſt wiſe and beneficial alliance would be that which hadfor its object the *gradual diſſolution* of thoſe relations, and not their preſervation.

2dly. "*The inordinate aſcendancy of the maritime powers,*" is a form of words without meaning; and ſo little worthy to be made a leading principle in politics, that it will not even ſtand the teſt of common logic. An idea merely relative, can never be the groundwork of an abſolute rule. Every attempt to lay down ſuch a rule, with ſuch materials, muſt naturally induce the ſuſpicion, that the Author wants to conceal unjuſtifiable views beneath theſe vague expreſſions,

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and to paſs his own will and pleaſure for law. It would, beſides, be an extraordinary principle, that every league of the continental powers ſhould be directed againſt the preponderance of the maritime ſtates. Before we ſpeak of the exaggerated aſcendancy of thoſe ſtates, and of alliances to be formed to oppoſe it, we ought to aſcertain exactly, how far their juſt, and neceſſary, and beneficial influence in the affairs of the continent, and on the whole political ſyſtem, ſhould extend. This is a queſtion of conſiderable importance; and, till this has been completely determined, we cannot think of providing againſt the exceſs of that, which nothing but the blindeſt partiality could condemn as altogether prejudicial.

In the place of theſe arbitrary aſſumptions, whoſe abſurdity and inſufficiency, when treated as general rules, muſt be obvious to the moſt ſuperficial examination, I think I may place the following maxim, which is certainly more clear and comprehenſive, even if it ſhould not completely exhauſt the ſubject.

A nation ought, in its alliances, to conſider its true and permanent intereſts (diſtinguiſhed from the mutable diſpoſitions, the temporary inclinations and averſions of its rulers) and, at the

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ſame time, to keep in view, as much as poſſible, the maintenance of that general balance, which will always moſt conduce to the true and permanent intereſt of each particular ſtate. It is the buſineſs of practical politics to determine how theſe intereſts may, at different periods, be beſt aſſerted, and what plans or combinations are beſt adapted to that end: no general principle can furniſh the ſolution of ſuch problems.

The above maxim, if it be not entirely deſtitute of truth, will lead to the following important, though melancholy concluſion. Every great diſorder, introduced into the federal ſyſtem, by the inordinate aſcendant of one of its conſtituent parts, not only deſtroys the balance of the whole, but throws ſuch difficulties in the way of future uſeful alliances, as to render the formation of ſuch, next to impoſſible. The connexion between this poſition, and what I have laid down as the leading principle of alliances, may, I think, be ſufficiently demonſtrated.

1ſt. Let us ſuppoſe ſome nation to have obtained an abſolute preponderance; that nation cannot enter into any alliance whatever, conſiſtently either with the intereſts of the remaining powers, or its own. With regard to the intereſts

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of the reſt: if it ſhould engage in alliance with one of the more powerful, the preponderance ſo much dreaded would be thereby increaſed; the inſecurity of the other nations would be rendered greater, and the general diſorder more deſperate; and even the ſituation of its temporary ally would neceſſarily be more precarious than ever. But were it to form a connexion with a feeble ſtate, then, in addition to the above evils, the entire ſubjection of the pretended ally, and the total annihilation of its independence, would be the immediate conſequences. With reſpect to the intereſts of the preponderating ſtate itſelf, every ſuch alliance muſt be prejudicial, becauſe it contributes to ſupport and preſerve a ſyſtem, which cannot, from its nature, be of long duration; and which, even while it laſts, is productive of no real and ſolid good, no true and eſſential advantage to the very power whoſe pride it gratifies. There is, moreover, ſomething unnatural and repugnant in the idea of an alliance of any nation, great or ſmall, with a power whoſe preponderance is the perpetual object of the ſolicitude, the plans, and vigilance of the reſt; whoſe aſcendancy (were it governed by angels) muſt render it the common enemy of all ſecurity and independence; and whoſe friendſhip is often more dangerous than even its enmity.

2dly.

2dly. It is equally difficult to conceive how, when one nation has acquired an exclusive preponderance, any beneficial alliance can be formed among the rest. This, though it may perhaps appear paradoxical, may, I think, be explained in a very satisfactory manner. In such a state of things as I am here supposing, every alliance must be directly or indirectly opposed to the preponderating power; for it would be no less impolitic than ungenerous, to act against any of the weaker nations. Every such confederacy against the predominant state, must either be composed of a part of the rest, or by the whole. In the former case it is evident, that those who are not included in it, will necessarily be impelled to draw nearer to the common enemy, either by avowed alliances, or by a system of neutrality not very different; and thus will a partial confederacy naturally tend to render things worse. In the latter case (and it likewise might very probably happen in the former), the alliance is converted into a coalition, with all the attendant difficulties and dangerous peculiarities of such a league; and the permanent interests of the several powers are sacrificed to a temporary object, of which, unfortunately, the attainment is always extremely doubtful.

I might adduce a great number of examples from past times, and advance many conjectures

with reſpect to the future, to render this reaſoning more clear and impreſſive; but I leave all that to the judgment and penetration of the attentive reader. There are certain political truths of ſo comfortleſs a nature, certain relations ſo critical, that they will not bear to be treated but in a very general manner.

It will be eaſy, after theſe obſervations, to appreciate the nature of the preſent relations between France and her allies; and to judge how far we may expect from them the re-eſtabliſhment of the ſubverted ſyſtem of Europe. The Author of the *Etat de la France* has dignified the alliances of the French republic with Spain, Holland, and Genoa, by calling them the firſt foundations of a future federal edifice*. He quotes them as honourable and irreſiſtible proofs of the generoſity and diſintereſtedneſs of the republic, as aſſurances of the uprightneſs of her principles, and as the productions of an almoſt wonderful political wiſdom.

* Neither Switzerland nor the Ciſalpine republic are mentioned in this ſcheme of the future federal ſyſtem of France. What can be the reaſon of the omiſſion? They are as much the faithful allies of the French republic as thoſe the Author has ſpecified: they maintain French armies, ſubmit to the guardianſhip of the great nation, guaranty the ſubſiſting relations, &c.

I ſhould be very juſtly cenſured, were I formally to analyze theſe panegyrics. The Author was no leſs acquainted than any of his readers, with the real nature of the connexions of France with Spain, Holland, &c. and if he truly and conſcientiouſly conſidered as alliances the relations exiſting between the French republic and the nations honoured with the vague and equivocal title of her allies; his conception of an alliance muſt be very different from all hitherto received notions. Such were the alliances (though the terms were certainly more favourable) of Sicily, Greece, Aſia Minor, Egypt, &c. with the Romans! If the future alliances of France are to be formed on theſe models; if the preſent condition of Switzerland and Holland, Italy and Spain, awaits all thoſe to be hereafter leagued with the French government; it may well indeed be aſked, whether the friendſhip and protection of that power are leſs fatal than her declared enmity. If theſe relations, formed and maintained by force of arms, are to be the baſis of a new federal ſyſtem, and a future law of nations, Europe muſt ardently wiſh that the ſuperſtructure to be raiſed upon ſuch a foundation may never be completed*.

This wiſh becomes ſtill more earneſt, when we learn the principles on which this new ſyſtem

* Vide Note H H.

of

of French alliances is to be raiſed and propagated. The declaration of our Author on that head (and his authority for the explanation and defence of thoſe principles is ſurely not to be rejected) is no leſs inſtructive than alarming. "If France," ſays he, "cannot extend her federal ſyſtem on the continent in any other way, ſhe will employ the only means left her by the blindneſs and obſtinacy of nations which, refuſing her alliance, will perſiſt in the continuance of a deſtructive war: for political conventions ſhe will ſubſtitute military treaties: and if princes continue deaf to the voice of their own intereſts, which require amity with France, ſhe will forcibly enter into alliance with the countries they are unable to defend; and, covering their territories with her armies, will uſe their reſources as her own."

This clear, undiſguiſed, and unequivocal declaration, is the beſt comment on the theory of French alliances. Thus have they hitherto been formed, and thus will it be with all ſucceeding ones. Such muſt and will continue to be the ſyſtem of politics, when the aſcendancy of one nation has deſtroyed the ſecurity of all; when, deprived of every federative ſafeguard, the weak are reduced to utter helpleſſneſs, and the law of nations is ſupplanted by the law of force.

Ere we diſcuſs the political conduct of France towards her allies, we muſt at leaſt wait till ſhe has allies. Thoſe who are now honoured with that appellation, are, at beſt, only her clients. It will be time to ſpeak of the alliances of France in the true ſenſe of the word, when ſhe ſhall be connected upon free and equal terms, with one of the greater powers of Europe; one of thoſe which have hitherto maintained their independence. But in the preſent ſtate of things, may the guardian angel of Europe avert ſuch an event! An alliance of France, preponderant as ſhe now is, with any of the principal powers, would lead to incalculable miſchief, would probably be the ſignal for endleſs misfortunes.

CHAP. III.

Of France and her Enemies.

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* opens the conſideration of this ſubject with a ſtring of inviting aſſurances and brilliant promiſes, reſpecting the principles, the ſpirit, and the object of the preſent politics of France. "France has and knows no natural enemy. France never deſires the ruin of thoſe ſhe fights againſt."--"France only

only makes war to diſſolve alliances incompatible with the tranquillity of Europe. France requires no extenſion of her federal relations to enſure her own ſecurity. She will be induced to form new engagements by charity alone towards ſuch as want her aſſiſtance. Any nation injured by an alteration in the balance of Europe, threatened by an ambitious neighbour, oppreſſed by an intolerable yoke, or in want of a powerful ſupport, will find the French government ready to adopt it among the objects of its federative policy."

I ſhall adhere to my original plan, and omit all animadverſions on theſe aſſurances, ſo far as they are connected with the perſonal characters and opinions, the wiſhes and principles of the rulers of France. Whether theſe, totally uninfluenced by paſſion or intereſt, employ all their efforts, and direct all their views to enſure the general ſecurity of all nations, and the common welfare of Europe, I leave entirely unexamined. I confine myſelf to the following obſervations, which are founded on paſt facts, preſent undeniable truths, and views of the future, deduced from poſitive relations, independent of perſonal opinion and inclinations; and which are agreeable to the nature of things, the only fixed and certain clue to rational politics.

 1. "*France*

1. " *France has no natural enemy ; ſhe recogniſes none.*"—It is true indeed that the ſcience of politics, in the ſocial conſtitution to be eſtabliſhed among nations, admits not national antipathies among the number of their relations. But the application of this theory to the actual ſtate of ſociety, is unfortunately as limited as that of the pure moral law, to the actions of individuals. Little as this laſt is able to ſuppreſs all anti-ſocial inclinations and propenſities in the mind of man, ſo little can the former maintain a ſyſtem perfectly conformable to the law of nations, and adapted to the general welfare: which often inevitably encounters private intereſts, national prejudices, and national paſſions. There do exiſt natural enmities between nations, though a more exalted policy may refuſe to acknowledge them. I ſay nothing here of mere popular antipathies; though even theſe, if traced to their origin, will ſeldom be found deſtitute of ſome reaſonable foundation. I mean by natural enmity, the relation between two ſtates, whoſe geographical, political, or military ſituations, or ſome object common to their induſtry or deſires, though not equally attainable to both, induce a ſtate of continual jealouſy, and, conſequently, of continual, more or leſs active oppoſition.

Such was the relation formerly ſubſiſting between Rome and Carthage; two nations, whoſe irrecon-

irreconcilable enmity, ſo conſpicuous in hiſtory, preſents an inſtructive leſſon to mankind. In the ſame relation towards each other have France and England ſtood ſince the beginning of the ſeventeenth century; from the moment when a large portion of the induſtry, the power and the glory of both, began to be founded upon an extenſive commerce; when the policy and ambition of both began to be principally directed towards remote ſettlements and colonial monopoly, and to a powerful marine, as the neceſſary means of ſecuring theſe advantages; and when each became the centre of a diſtinct federal combination, and ſtruggled with its rival for the firſt place in the general ſyſtem of Europe. All theſe natural ſources of perpetual oppoſition have continued, under different appearances, and with various reſults, until the preſent day; they will ſtill continue to exiſt, and to produce the ſame effects; and, though we may hope that wiſdom and prudence will moderate their fatal influence, and avert from ourſelves and poſterity the ſhocking tragedy of an internecine war; yet this deep-rooted and extenſive rivalry muſt be taken into the account, in every political reaſoning, as one of its conſtant and moſt important elements.

While this is a truth which cannot be denied, it is, on the other hand, equally certain, that France, before the revolution, ſtood towards no

continental power whatever, in the unfortunate relation of a natural enemy. I have endeavoured above to explain the cauſes of this. The revolution had, indeed, powerfully and viſibly ſuſpended the operation of thoſe cauſes; but they would by no means have ceaſed entirely, if the new political ſyſtem of France had borne even the ſmalleſt reſemblance to the old. The revolution could not but fill Europe with apprehenſions of the moſt alarming nature, and inſpire all that ſurrounded France, whether friends or enemies, with fear, reſentment, or diſguſt. But had the federal conſtitution of Europe been replaced on its former footing, at the cloſe of that revolution; had the French nation recurred to its former limits; and had the balance of political and military power been reſtored; whatever might have been the final reſult of her internal convulſions, the relations of peace and amity, formerly ſubſiſting between France and all the continental powers, would, in ſome way or other, have been re-eſtabliſhed. Is that now to be hoped or expected? All Europe bleeds at the wounds inflicted by the aggrandizement of France; and her dreadful preponderance ſtill threatens, like an impending ſtorm ready to burſt over the heads of a trembling world. Do we here find (let the admirers of France anſwer the queſtion), do we here find the materials for a ſyſtem of peace, of

mutual confidence, and ſecurity ? Does this conſtrained relation preſent the proſpect of a happy renewal and confirmation of the bonds of federal union ? Is not the whole ſyſtem of Europe, ſo long as it may yet endure, forced, on the contrary, to maintain an armed and conſtant oppoſition to France ? And does not ſuch an armed oppoſition, in many eſſential reſpects, reſemble a ſtate of perpetual war ?

The truth therefore is, that France, who before the revolution had no natural and permanent enemy on the continent, is now (in a certain ſenſe of the word) ſurrounded by nothing but enemies. She may, relying on her great power, continue to deſpiſe theſe enemies ; ſhe may even, by moderation and equity in her proceedings, diſarm their miſtruſt for a time ; finally, by the coincidence of temporary intereſts, ſhe may, perhaps, obtain the alliance of one or other of them. But all this does not invalidate the grounds of my aſſertion : I ſtill hold by what is permanent and eſſential in the political ſyſtem ; and to the aſſertion that France can now acknowledge no natural enemy, I oppoſe one, which is certainly more conformable to reaſon and experience ; that, in the common courſe of things, a nation ſituated as France now is, *cannot reckon upon any natural friend.*

2. " *France*

2. " *France never deſires the ruin of thoſe ſhe fights againſt.*"—What ſhe now does, or may hereafter deſire, will only be ſhown by future experience: a bare aſſertion, whatever be its authority, is no ſufficient ſecurity. But what ſhe hitherto has purſued and accomplished, is open to diſcuſſion; for it has now become hiſtorical fact, and, conſequently, ſubject for inveſtigation. The Author even calls upon his cotemporaries to devote themſelves to this examination. He aſſerts (and many of his readers have found the aſſertion no leſs true than ingenious that it is not the conqueſts of a nation, but the treaties which ſhe propoſes, or to which ſhe ſubmits, that diſplay the views ſhe entertains, and ſhow the meaſure of her moderation and forbearance, or of her inſatiable avarice and injuſtice *. I too will allow the truth of this propoſition, with ſome reſtrictions; but I really cannot conceive what will be thereby gained for the friends of the French government. For I think it will not be very eaſy to ſhow, that France has hitherto manifeſted any extraordinary degree of magnanimity in her treaties of peace. The Author of the *Etat de la France* has unhappily adduced the treaty of Campo Formio as an inſtance of it. He forgot that now, when a part of the veil which covered the negotiations of Leoben and

* Vide Note I I.

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Udine, on the one hand, and the proceedings of the Directory on the other, has been withdrawn, there is ſcarcely a diplomatic tyro in Europe unacquainted with the true cauſes of the then pretended moderation of France. He forgot, beſides, that the ever memorable congreſs of Raſtadt was the true commentary, the afterpiece, the *finale* of the treaty of Campo Formio! We may now apply his principle to another and more recent example, an example, in many reſpects, more intereſting, deciſive, and inſtructive, than that treaty which now only exiſts in the page of hiſtory: we have now got the treaty of LUNEVILLE.

I am far from intending to cenſure the French, or any other government, for taking advantage of its ſucceſſes at the concluſion of a victorious campaign, and regulating the conditions of peace according to the events of the war. This can never be a ſubject of reproach to her. But if her moderation is to be extolled, to be repreſented as a ſource of conſolation for the ſuffering party, as a happy counterbalance to her power, and, as it were, an antidote to her fortune and victories (which in the public diſcuſſions of the treaty of Luneville has more than once been ſaid); it ſhould firſt be ſhown, that there is an obvious difference between what ſhe has, and what ſhe might have inſiſted upon; what ſhe could have required

required conſiſtently with her own intereſts: but I look in vain for this in the hiſtory of the treaty of Luneville.

It is thought ſurpriſing, that in this treaty France *only* made the Rhine the extent of her limits. But is ſhe then expected to extend her already immenſe territory beyond all poſſibility of governing it? Is there not always a point beyond which the aggrandizement of a nation becomes an immediate cauſe of its weakneſs? Had not France long ſince attained that point? And when we ſpeak of plans of conqueſt and dominion in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, are they to be ſuppoſed like thoſe of an Alexander or a Gengis Khan? The idea of an univerſal monarchy has loſt its former meaning; the buſineſs of government is become ſo much more difficult and intricate, that the moſt extravagant ambition will limit what it deſires to rule; and when in our days a nation is ſaid to give laws to Europe, it is underſtood to do it indirectly and not immediately. As ſoon as we conſider the treaty of Luneville in this light, we ſee that France obtained by it every thing that any treaty of peace could have ſecured to her. She fixed her own limits, that is, the limits of her immediate active government; not thoſe of her political, military, and (to apply an old

term

term to a new relation) feudal ſeigniory. The treaty left Holland, and Switzerland, and Italy, from the Alps to Malta, in the hands of the French government; it left her, tacitly or explicitly, the power of diſpoſing at her pleaſure of the future fate of thoſe countries. It deſtroyed the few fortified places which Germany might yet conſider a bulwark againſt France in any future war; and once for all, laid bare the richeſt provinces of Germany to the firſt irruption of a French army. Even in the internal diſtribution of power, in the equalization of the ſtates, in the new political organization of the Empire, France reſerved to herſelf the right of deciding. I cannot conceive any eſſential advantage that France could have ſought for or deſired in the preſent treaty more than ſhe acquired; and if any European power at the cloſe of the eighteenth century was deſirous of forming a rational and practicable plan of univerſal dominion, there would hardly be found a more ſuitable foundation for it than this treaty.

If by the ruin of a ſtate is to be underſtood the deſtruction of its independence, it would be mockery to aſſert, that France has fought the preſervation of the nations with whom ſhe has been at war. For the reſult, the final and undeniable

niable reſult, of this unexampled war is, that at the preſent moment there no longer exiſt any independent nations, except ſome of the principal ſtates. If then the moderation of France is to be one of her merits, and an object of praiſe and admiration, it muſt firſt be proved that France had it in her power to ſubject theſe leading powers to the ſame fate that all the ſmaller ones experienced; and this, happily, might not be quite ſo eaſily proved.

3. "*France makes war for the purpoſe of diſſolving alliances hoſtile to the peace of Europe.*"—That object has been completely attained. Every alliance againſt France, with one exception only, is now deſtroyed. I will not here again inquire, whether the peace of Europe would thereby have ſuffered if theſe alliances had been more firmly cemented, and, conſequently, more ſucceſsful. Experience preſents a melancholy account of what the peace of Europe has hitherto gained by their diſſolution; we wait with patient reſignation for the advantages henceforward to be derived from it. The meaning of the French maxim is at all events ſufficiently evident: "There ſhall, in future, no league whatever be formed, till France ſhall have pronounced it lawful and good."—This is the fundamental law of the new federal conſtitution of Europe. If this

this rule be adopted, there will no longer be any oppoſition to France: war is the puniſhment for thoſe who tranſgreſs it; and this melancholy alternative cloſes every proſpect of the future.

After announcing theſe general principles, the author of the *Etat de la France* proceeds to examine the ſeveral relations between France and the powers at war with her when his work was publiſhed. The number of theſe has ſince then been conſiderably diminiſhed; for England, feebly ſupported by the Porte, is now the only power in arms againſt France. The other confederates in the laſt European league have all of them, either tacitly or formally, retired from a fruitleſs conteſt.

There was a period when Ruſſia, the late moſt decided enemy of France, ſeemed diſpoſed not only to be at peace with that triumphant power, but even to form a cloſe alliance, and act in concert with it. It was natural and conſiſtent that the French government ſhould uſe all its efforts to accompliſh this ſingular metamorphoſis; and that the partiſans of that government ſhould exhauſt their eloquence and ingenuity to prove to the Ruſſian monarch how infi-

nite

nite the glory and advantage he was to derive from his new connexion. But that they ſhould expect to gain the aſſent of the reſt of Europe to their new doctrine, and to perſuade all other nations that this monſtrous alliance was to be a ſource of ſecurity, liberty, and proſperity to them; this required a degree of aſſurance on the one hand, and of credulity on the other, almoſt ſurpaſſing all conception. I will not here inquire, whether the true intereſts of Ruſſia can ever induce its government to form an alliance with France (which can hardly be conceived poſſible, unleſs its ancient relations with England be entirely given up); I am ſpeaking of the intereſts of Europe, and of the politics of each nation with reſpect to the whole. In which view of the ſubject, I aſſert, upon the firmeſt conviction, that an alliance between Ruſſia and France, ſuch as was ſome months ago, and ſurely not without reaſon, apprehended, would be the moſt dangerous, the moſt fatal of all political combinations; that if in the politics of Europe there yet remained any ſenſe of dignity, of intereſt, and of duty, every nerve would be ſtrained, and every power employed to counteract this laſt and moſt formidable evil; and that if ever it ſhould be realized, the moment of its formation would be the laſt of all independence, all ſecurity in Europe, all peace but peace eternal! Happily for the general

welfare,

welfare, the idea of this unnatural alliance could only be conceived in a very uncommon mind; and whatever may be the future policy of the preſent ſovereign of Ruſſia, it is to be hoped all danger of the renewal of that coloſſal project has for ever ceaſed to be an object of political ſpeculation.

The Author ſpeaks in vague and obſcure terms of the relations between France and Turkey; the ambiguity of his expreſſions beſpeaks the undecided plans of his government with reſpect to the affairs of the Porte. He is uncertain whether the Ottoman Porte is to receive new life from the patronage of the French republic, or whether it is to be deſtroyed for ever; he prepares us for either of theſe two events. We will examine no farther into them at preſent. The important changes which Europe may expect on that ſide, and which may perhaps once more ſhake it to its foundations, belong entirely to futurity; the preſent moment is ſo overloaded with preſent misfortunes and preſſing dangers, that it would be unwiſe to anticipate thoſe to come: let the men who will ſooner or later be called upon to deprecate or to bear thoſe new ſtorms, employ their ſkill and efforts with zeal and fidelity when the hour ſhall arrive.

I ſhall equally avoid a minute analyſis of the preſent relations between France and Auſtria. The treaty of Luneville has diſplayed to the world the final reſult of the war between them. I have already made ſome obſervations in the preceding chapters, on the future policy of Auſtria, as it ſtands connected with the federal conſtitution of Europe; every thing beyond that is out of my ſphere.

But the political and commercial ſyſtem of England, and its relations with the other powers, are neceſſarily connected with the main object of the preſent inveſtigation. To any perſon who has in the leaſt ſtudied the character of the book I am now anſwering; to any one, even ſuperficially, acquainted with the principles and views of the Author, it muſt have been obvious, that as his firſt object was to draw a flattering picture of the new political ſyſtem of France, his next was to portray that of England in the moſt odious colours. On more than one occaſion, indeed, he even gives reaſon to ſuſpect that this laſt was the chief part of his deſign. Thus we find all his pretended general reaſonings and ſpeculations on the intereſts of Europe applying at laſt excluſively to England. Even his vindication of the French government, and his encomiums on their principles and conduct, are in the

ſhape

ſhape of invective and reproach againſt the miniſtry of their rivals. And his brilliant promiſes of all the bleſſings to be diffuſed by France over Europe, are confounded with his complaints of the inſufferable tyranny exerciſed by Great Britain.

In the examination of the *Etat de la France*, it is therefore neceſſary to enter as fully as poſſible into the relations between England and the reſt of Europe. This inveſtigation is of itſelf one of the moſt important in the ſphere of ſpeculative politics. The Author does not merely ſpeak his own opinion, even in his ſevereſt accuſations; he is the echo of the times. He repreſents the prevailing ſentiments and opinions, the uniform bias of a great multitude of politicians in all countries; and though he may perhaps have made ſome peculiar additions to the favourite topic of the day; though he may have treated the ſubject with more than common ingenuity and more than common bitterneſs; yet he has on the whole been faithful to the views, the argumentation, and the ſource whence almoſt all political wiſdom and eloquence has, of late years, been derived whenever England was the ſubject of diſcuſſion.

I have already conſidered, at ſome length, what England has hitherto been in a political

ſenſe; and what ſhe muſt neceſſarily continue to be, on account of her ſituation with regard to Europe in general, and her relations to France in particular. But we now come to another altogether different point of view, the favourite topic of many, whoſe honeſt belief, or paſſion, or intereſt, are perpetually filling the world with alarm and dread of the aſcendancy of England. This, in contradiſtinction to the other, may be called the *domeſtic policy* of Great Britain; which I am now going to examine, in order to determine whether its effects, when impartially conſidered, are different from thoſe of her general politics. If the prevailing opinion on this ſubject be conſonant with truth, the induſtry of Great Britain is for ever at variance with the induſtry of all Europe: England is only enriched by impoveriſhing other nations; and her amazing power is merely the conſequence of the utter helpleſſneſs, or, as others term it, the abſolute ſlavery in which ſhe keeps them all. If this opinion is well founded, the Britiſh empire muſt be ſeen in a very peculiar light. It would then neceſſarily be, even in peace, a perpetual enemy to the independence and happineſs of all countries; and in war, nothing ſhort of the tyrant and terror of Europe. Then, indeed, whatever might otherwiſe be truly ſaid of its political utility would

loſe

loſe all weight. For though the peculiar reſources of England might be a ſafeguard againſt the deſtructive attempts of other powers, ſuch caſual benefit would be too dearly purchaſed by a perpetuity of intolerable evil. Theſe accuſations muſt therefore be completely inveſtigated before we can pronounce definitively upon the relations of England to the reſt of Europe. Till the falſehood of theſe charges be demonſtrated, we cannot with confidence aſſert, that England has a juſt title to that place in the political ſyſtem, which in many important reſpects can never be denied to her.

CHAP. IV.

An Inquiry into the principal Cauſes of Complaint againſt the commercial Tyranny of the Engliſh.

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* has ſpecified the following charges of accuſation againſt England, which comprehend, if I miſtake not, all that has been, or can hereafter be ſaid, againſt the maritime and commercial ſuperiority of Great Britain.

1ſt. "The celebrated Navigation Act laid the firſt foundation of the oppreſſive preponderance of the navy and commerce of the Engliſh. This unjuſt and hoſtile regulation induced a ſtate of perpetual warfare between the induſtry of the Britiſh and that of every other nation."

2dly. "England has contended for colonies, factories, commercial eſtabliſhments, or excluſive privileges in every part of the world; and has actually acquired, to the prejudice of all other nations, the unbounded and excluſive enjoyment of every branch of induſtry, every ſource of riches, and every valuable poſſeſſion, whether territorial or commercial, in the inhabited or uninhabited regions of the globe."

3dly. "By this activity, and the immenſe monopoly of the ſale of her productions, ſhe has ſuppreſſed or fettered the induſtry of all the countries in Europe; ſhe has retarded their progreſs, impoſed the moſt oppreſſive of all tributes upon them, tyrannically deprived them of a moſt valuable right—the free exerciſe of their powers; and at length eſtabliſhed a political tyranny, as the natural conſequence of her mercantile and pecuniary ſway."

4thly.

4thly. " She has framed a new code of maritime laws, peculiar to herſelf, and rejected by every other nation ; has introduced the uſe of it by main force, on all ſeas; and thus in all her wars has perſecuted, impeded, or totally annihilated the commerce of every power that refuſed to engage in it on her ſide."

In the preſent chapter, I have only to do with the three firſt of theſe charges; the fourth will find its proper place in the next Part of this work, in which the relations of neutral powers will be diſcuſſed.

I. *The Act of Navigation.*

The Author of the *Etat de la France* has advanced ſuch obſervations on this Act, as clearly ſhow how neceſſary it is to explain its contents and meaning before any attempt is made to reaſon upon its character and conſequences. For, if this ſtatute, ſo celebrated in the hiſtory of political economy, were as well known on the continent as from its nature it ought to be, ſurely no writer would have ventured to call it " a permanent conſpiracy againſt the induſtry of all nations."

The principal proviſions of this act are as follow:—1ſt. No ſhip, except it be Britiſh property, commanded by a Britiſh captain, and having at leaſt three fourths of its crew Britiſh, is permitted to trade with the Britiſh colonies or ſettlements, or on the coaſt of Great Britain.—2dly. No foreign veſſel is allowed to bring any other goods to England, but ſuch as are the produce of the country to which the owner, the captain, and at leaſt three fourths of the crew of ſuch ſhip ſhall belong.—3dly. The importation of certain articles of foreign merchandiſe is prohibited either in Britiſh or foreign ſhips.—4thly. No ſea-fiſh, unleſs caught by Britiſh fiſhermen, and freighted on board Britiſh veſſels, are allowed to be imported into England. This act was made in the year 1651, in Cromwell's Protectorate, and confirmed by Charles II. in 1660. In order to conceal nothing relating to the point in queſtion, we muſt direct the attention of the enemies of this act to a circumſtance they take no notice of. The Act of Navigation does not comprehend all the prohibitive laws of the Britiſh commercial code. A number of later ſtatutes have, on the one hand, indirectly reſtricted the importation of many articles by heavy impoſitions; and on the other, have laid ſuch duties on certain articles of exportation as to increaſe the difficulty of a return

turn freight to the foreign merchant, and thus immediately impede his operations.

In the firſt place, if we conſider theſe laws with reſpect to the *right* of Great Britain to enact them, we ſurely ſhall not meet with the ſmalleſt doubt on that head; there can be no rational objection to it whatever. Every government has an indiſputable right to promote the internal induſtry of its people in what appears to it the ſafeſt and moſt effectual way; provided it does not abſolutely violate the privileges of other countries. No nation has a right to exact from another the unreſtricted admiſſion, or any admiſſion at all, of her produce, ſhips, and merchants. Theſe undeniable principles have been the foundation of all commercial regulations to the preſent day. All nations, without exception, have endeavoured to encourage or ſecure the chief branches of their induſtry by prohibitions, duties, impoſitions, and reſtrictions of every kind; and although the moſt eminent writers on political economy and government have held different opinions as to the wiſdom and efficacy of theſe reſtrictions, yet they have in no inſtance treated them as violations of the law of nations, as public offences, uſurpations, and crimes. Nay, more; the ſyſtem that occaſioned the prohibitive law, was not only adopted by every government in Europe, but was acted on, refined, and

and carried to the utmoſt extent that their reſpective ſituations, abilities, or neceſſities would allow. That they had not all of them their *navigation acts*, was no proof of magnanimity, or tender and conſcientious regard for the intereſt and welfare of their neighbours: it was owing to circumſtances, which rendered the thing impracticable for them; and perhaps to careleſſneſs, weakneſs, and (in this inſtance fortunate) inconſiſtency. Look at the various prohibitive laws, by which foreign commerce is reſtricted in other countries. It is impoſſible not to allow, that many of them are as oppreſſive in their effects as the Engliſh Navigation Act; and they are almoſt all as harſh and ſelfiſh, and intolerant and unfriendly in their principles.

The indiſputable right of every nation to promote its domeſtic induſtry, by every method which does not actually injure others, is, if poſſible, ſtill further ſtrengthened and confirmed, when the aids applied to its *induſtry* are at the ſame time uſeful, or perhaps abſolutely neceſſary to its *ſecurity*. A country whoſe very exiſtence requires the maintenance of a numerous army, is fully authorized to prevent its citizens, by ſevere laws, from entering into foreign ſervice. A country that does not produce ſufficient grain to ſecure its inhabitants from

from the dangers of famine, has an undeniable right to forbid the exportation of all corn by penal ſtatutes. A country whoſe independence and ſecurity reſts entirely upon a powerful navy, poſſeſſes the moſt indiſputable right to reſtrict its commercial relations with other powers by ſuch regulations as may be neceſſary to enſure that firſt object of all government and legiſlation. This laſt was the caſe of England: her ſecurity depends upon her navy: a powerful navy cannot be formed without an extenſive navigation; to create an extenſive navigation was therefore the firſt and neceſſary object of the Britiſh legiſlature. This is ſufficient to ſhow that the Navigation Act (a part of the domeſtic policy of Great Britain) cannot, upon any principle of truth and juſtice, be termed "a meaſure offenſive to the intereſts of other nations," much leſs "a continual conſpiracy againſt their rights."

But is this reſtrictive regulation altogether conſiſtent with the principles of a wiſe, enlightened, and liberal policy? Were there not other and leſs odious methods of encouraging the induſtry of the Engliſh? And is not the Navigation Act, though perfectly juſtifiable in itſelf, though highly conducive to the private intereſts of England, is it not a ſubject of perpetual um-

brage to other nations? Theſe queſtions will lead to a more accurate knowledge of the real character of the Britiſh Navigation Act.

It is, generally ſpeaking, true, that laws are prejudicial when they impede or reſtrict the natural courſe and free expanſion of human induſtry; when they forcibly impel it into new channels, or direct it where it would not naturally have flowed; when they urge its progreſs at the expenſe of its freedom. The Navigation Act is a law of this nature. It compels the inhabitant of Great Britain to fetch the produce of foreign countries in his own veſſels, or to remain entirely, or in a great meaſure, deprived of them. It obliges him, therefore, to devote a larger portion of labour and capital to foreign trade than he would have done in the natural courſe of things if other nations had participated without reſtriction in the importation. It poſitively forbids him to employ the induſtry of a foreigner, even when it might ſuit his intereſt better than his own. It prevents him from purchaſing certain articles abroad cheaper than he can get them at home. It prevents him from making uſe of foreign ſhipping, even in thoſe caſes where the freight is cheaper than that of his countrymen, and where he would conſequently import the goods at a lower price.

Conſidered

Conſidered upon the general principles of an enlightened political economy, the Navigation Act is no leſs condemnable than all other prohibitive ſtatutes.

But circumſtances ſometimes render it the duty of a government to depart, in particular caſes, from general principles of ſtate economy, when a temporary, or perhaps a permanent intereſt, urges conſiderations of more importance than any of the common maxims of adminiſtration. It is to circumſtances of this imperious nature that the Engliſh Navigation Act owes its being *. In order to form a counterpoiſe to the powerful ſtates of the continent, to protect her inſular territory, and maintain her independence, England was obliged to uſe every effort to raiſe and ſupport a powerful marine. The importance of the object juſtified even coercive laws: The Navigation Act is indirectly coercive in its nature and operation. The Engliſh were compelled to cultivate, with their own veſſels, their own ſailors, and their own capitals, many branches of foreign trade, which would otherwiſe have remained, partly or entirely, in the hands of ſtrangers. This was a powerful ſtimulus to the commercial marine of Great Britain, which was thereby rendered a nurſery for

* Vide Note K K.

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the navy, and an important inſtrument of the greatneſs and ſecurity of the ſtate, more rapidly and more effectually, than if left to the natural courſe of things.

But let us not forget, that, according to the genuine principles of political economy, the Navigation Act, which ſecured theſe important objects, was far from being advantageous to the induſtry of the nation; was, on the contrary, a reſtraint upon it. It was a ſacrifice to which England willingly ſubmitted, the better to eſtabliſh her ſecurity and independence. In affairs of commerce, the true intereſt of every nation requires an extenſive competition, and the unreſtrained liberty of buying and ſelling to the greateſt advantage afforded by its induſtry and ſituation. The Navigation Act infringed this liberty, and deſtroyed, or very much diminiſhed, that competition. So far from being directly beneficial to the foreign trade of Great Britain, this law was, in fact, indirectly detrimental to it.

No perſon acquainted with the real principles of national wealth and induſtry, can ever regard the Navigation Act as the foundation of England's commercial greatneſs*. It has been in ſpite of that act, and not by means of it, that her foreign commerce has acquired ſuch a wonderful extent. Its extraordinary progreſs and increaſe

* Vide Note L L.

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muſt be very differently accounted for: it is not the creature of the Navigation Act. If ſuch a law had been paſſed in any other country, deſtitute of the natural advantages, character, and reſources of England, it would have been a ſignal for the immediate annihilation of commerce; the ſuppreſſion of all induſtry; the deſtruction of every incentive to enterpriſe and activity.

Now, ſince the Navigation Act has produced none of the effects in England which have been aſcribed to it in the declamations of angry jealouſy, labouring to render odious the commercial induſtry of Great Britain; we have only to examine in what manner and how far it has been detrimental to other nations. For though it be impoſſible, upon any ground, to diſpute the right of the Britiſh government to enact ſuch a law; it might, nevertheleſs, in its conſequences be oppreſſive to other nations. Without being a poſitive act of injuſtice, it might deſerve the appellation of an unfair and hoſtile regulation; it might be conſtantly inimical to the intereſts of all Europe.

There is only one ſpecies of commerce directly injured by the Engliſh Navigation Act, viz. the conveyance from one country to another of the produce and manufactures of different nations. This may properly be termed the *freight trade*; and

and this was the great ſource of the aſtoniſhing riches of Holland. Holland was, in fact, the only nation immediately affected and injured by the Navigation Act. The Dutch and the very few other nations engaged in the carrying trade, were for ever deprived of the Engliſh market. The direct traffic between the different ſtates of Europe, with the productions of their own toil, or their own induſtry, was not impeded by it; and whatever reſtrictions even this may have been fettered with by other laws in England, and by the ſyſtem of duties eſtabliſhed there, they were only ſuch as the ſpirit of mercantile policy had produced in every other country *. The carrying nations alone had reaſon to complain of the Navigation Act; all others ought to have been indifferent to it. But it was not in the nature of things, that even the former ſhould be ruined by it: the act only excluded them from one country; and the markets of the reſt of Europe conſoled and indemnified them for the loſs. Experience has ſhwon, that neither Holland nor Hamburgh, nor any of the ſtates engaged in the ſame trade, have been either ruined or materially injured by it.

* If it ſecured to England the excluſive commerce of her own colonies, it did no more in that reſpect than the maritime ſtatutes of France, Spain, and Holland, in favour of their reſpective colonial ſyſtems.

If

If every government in Europe (ſay the accuſers of the Navigation Act) had enacted ſimilar laws againſt all other nations, the whole would have ſuffered a ſevere loſs in the total annihilation of the freight trade. This obſervation is extremely juſt; but the evil which it points to, could only be conceived and dreaded, upon one ſuppoſition, and that a very improbable one. All governments muſt either have entirely miſtaken their obvious intereſts, or wantonly have ſacrificed them to the mad deſire of injuring their neighbours. For every monopolizing ſtatute (this cannot be too often repeated) is in the firſt inſtance, and generally in the higheſt degree, pernicious to the country which has produced it. Such a law muſt always be improper, muſt be abſurd and unjuſtifiable, where reaſons of the higheſt importance do not urge the dangerous exception; and where, beſides, the nation that adopts the meaſure is not poſſeſſed of ſuch ſtrength and reſources in itſelf as are ſufficient to ſupport it. Theſe two conditions are united in the caſe of England only*: all other ſtates wanted either ſufficient reaſon for introducing ſuch a law, or the means of putting it in execution; moſt of them poſſeſſed neither the one nor the other.

The reſult of the foregoing examination is, therefore,

* Vide Note M M.

1ſt, That the Britiſh Navigation Act repreſſed the induſtry of other countries in one reſpect only—that of excluding the carrying nations from one of their principal markets; in every other, the commerce and induſtry of Europe remained unmoleſted by it.

2dly, That this law was no ſource of the commercial greatneſs and riches of England. It operated, on the contrary, like all monopolizing ſtatutes, prejudicially to the induſtry of the nation; and the extraordinary proſperity at which its commerce has arrived, muſt be referred to other cauſes.

3dly, The Navigation Act was a wiſe regulation as far as it encouraged, though at the expenſe of the ordinary principles of political economy, a branch of national induſtry, which contributed to the ſecurity and independence of Great Britain. A good policy made it contribute indirectly to every ſource of the welfare and proſperity of the ſtate.

4thly, That ſuppoſing the Navigation Act to have been unwiſe, it can never have deſerved the title of unjuſt. For it is neither more nor leſs than a regulation of domeſtic policy, for which a nation is not anſwerable to other powers. But

ſince the wiſdom of the act cannot, under the circumſtances of England's ſituation, be called in queſtion, every ſhadow of an argument againſt its juſtice, is, of courſe, done away.

5thly, In as much as the Britiſh legiſlature went even beyond the Navigation Act, in prohibitive commercial ſtatutes, the impoſition of heavy duties on foreign produce, and other ſchemes of mercantile policy; and as far as it fettered the induſtry of its own and other countries, without being ſufficiently juſtified by more important motives, it proceeded upon blameworthy principles. But what government in Europe can reproach the Britiſh nation on that account? The ſame mercantile policy has prevailed in every country, without exception, even to the preſent day. But, ſince the principles of political economy have no where been ſo thoroughly developed, and ſo extenſively practiſed as in England; the preſumption is in favour of that country, that it has, more than any other*, abandoned the confined maxims of narrow-minded trade; a preſumption which has been confirmed by more than one example, eſpecially in the laſt twenty years.

England's commercial ſtatutes do therefore furniſh no cauſe of complaint againſt the maritime

* I ſay *more than any other*; for it muſt be confeſſed that even England has not riſen altogether ſuperior to them.

tyranny of that nation: if thoſe complaints have any foundation, it muſt be ſought for elſewhere.

II. *Of the Monopoly of trans European Dominion.*

When the expanſion of the human faculties, and the civil and ſocial improvement of mankind, ſhall have attained the point towards which Europe has been gradually tending during the three laſt centuries; all civilized nations muſt be impelled by the deſire of eſtabliſhing a permanent ſyſtem of connexion with the remoteſt parts of the world. The love of luxury, and the thirſt of knowledge, new wants, and new powers of induſtry, the dictates of reaſon, and the allurements of paſſion, combine to give an irreſiſtible force to this propenſity. What was originally only a ſpirit of adventure, is gradually converted into ſyſtematic activity; what was at firſt ſuperfluity, becomes habitual, regular, and neceſſary. The productions of the moſt diſtant regions become articles of daily neceſſity; the ſea, as well as the land, is covered by the human ſpecies; and navigation, commerce, and colonization, are ranked with the more ſimple occupations of agriculture and domeſtic manufacture.

This unlimited progreſs of induſtry, this unbounded multiplication of its materials, its inſtruments, and its objects, is the deſtination of humanity.

humanity. Civilization is not to be the exclu-ſive privilege of this or that favoured people; it will ſpread over the whole habitable globe in the courſe of time. If we conſider them with refer-ence to this ineſtimable object—the ſettlements of Europeans in other quarters of the globe, are fortunate and glorious events, notwithſtanding all the evils that accompanied them; and if we loſe ſight of theſe conſequences, all is enigma, doubt, and darkneſs. Why was every ſtep of the civilized, among ſavage nations, to be marked by the moſt atrocious cruelties? Why were mil-lions to be deſtroyed, that a happier race might be eſtabliſhed upon their graves? Why were deſtructive wars, and robbery, and oppreſſion, and intolerable ſlavery, made the groundwork and neceſſary condition of the nobleſt work of man? Human reaſon is loſt in theſe inexpli-cable contradictions; between the grandeur and ſublimity of the end, and the baſeneſs and hor-ribleneſs of the means.

Force and injuſtice were, however, with few exceptions, the groundwork of all European colonies and dominions in the reſt of the world. Portugueſe, Spaniards, Dutch, Engliſh, and French, are, in this reſpect, all alike condemn-able: no nation can reproach another. Nay,

more, no European has a right to reproach the commercial ſtates, with the oppreſſion of the original inhabitants of their foreign poſſeſſions. For every one participates in the manifold advantages thence derived to all Europe, which affect every branch of induſtry, and ſpread through every rank of ſociety. No one will renounce his ſhare of thoſe advantages; and we are therefore all of us equally reſponſible for the evils attendant upon their cultivation, and, in a certain degree, for the crimes which accompanied the original ſettlements.

Theſe no longer exiſt but in the page of hiſtory; the rapacious ſpirit of the firſt conquerors has every where yielded to more mild and humane diſpoſitions. There is but one opinion among civilized nations concerning the neceſſity of continuing the preſent ſyſtem, notwithſtanding all the lamentations of philanthropy. We can therefore only hope that the wiſdom of an enlightened age may gradually introduce among the numerous ſlaves of our true and imaginary wants, of our inſatiable deſires and reſtleſs activity, that happy ſtate of being, which is alone conſiſtent with the intereſt of all, and calculated to ſecure the reign of peace and juſtice upon earth.

If,

If, then, the powers of Europe do continue to hold trans-European dominions, with which they cannot maintain a due communication but by means of an extenſive commercial ſyſtem; all that we have now to conſider is, how that dominion and commercial ſyſtem may beſt be modified according to the general intereſts of Europe.

In the anſwer to this queſtion, it is generally taken for granted, that an equal participation by all maritime ſtates in the advantages of commerce and colonization, would be the moſt beneficial conſtitution. For it is conceived that a monopoly of colonial produce, highly injurious and oppreſſive to the reſt, muſt accrue from the too great aſcendant, and ſtill more from the ſole ſway of any one nation in ſuch an extenſive ſphere of induſtry and dominion.

I will, in the firſt place, admit the juſtice of this opinion, and proceed upon that ſuppoſition (not forgetting the complaints againſt England) to examine the diſtribution of the Eaſt and Weſt Indian poſſeſſions of Europeans, before the French revolution, and at the preſent time.

The Engliſh were in poſſeſſion of the largeſt and richeſt part of the Eaſt Indies. They had there founded the greateſt empire known to thoſe

fertile regions ſince the reign of the Moguls. Their agents collected the richeſt productions of the land, and their veſſels tranſported them to Europe. They had opened, beſides, an extenſive trade with the eaſtern coaſts of Aſia, and particularly with China; and the tranſportation of ſome articles from thence, which (as tea, for example) had become of the firſt neceſſity in Europe, now formed one of the moſt important branches of their induſtry. Notwithſtanding all this, the Engliſh were neither the excluſive dominators in the Eaſt Indies, nor the only traders in the Indian ocean. The French, the Dutch, the Portugueſe, the Danes, had a conſiderable ſhare of both. The veſſels of theſe nations viſited every coaſt, iſland, harbour, and ſettlement, from the mouth of the Indus to Japan. They poſſeſſed factories, towns, and provinces, that rivalled thoſe of the Engliſh. Till the end of the war of 1756, it even remained doubtful whether Hindoſtan was to acknowledge the ſovereignty of the French or Britiſh. The empire of the Dutch in the Indian ocean, was no leſs important in its kind than that of the Engliſh on the continent; the excluſive poſſeſſion of the ſpice iſlands was an inexhauſtible ſource of riches. England and Holland divided the trade with China; that of Japan belonged to the Dutch alone. England was undoubtedly the preponderating ſtate in the

Eaſt

Eaſt Indies at the commencement of the French revolution; but ſhe was far from enjoying the ſole dominion or the excluſive commerce of that part of the world.

In the Weſt Indies the diviſion was ſtill more equal; and if there was any preponderance, it was evidently on the ſide of France. St. Domingo alone outweighed all the reſt of the Antilles; and beſides that invaluable iſland, the French poſſeſſed the richeſt and moſt important of the ſmaller ones. In extent of poſſeſſions, Spain was not inferior to Great Britain in the Bay of Mexico; for Cuba alone was three times as valuable as the Engliſh iſlands: but the weakneſs and blindneſs of her government rendered her leſs powerful. Holland, Denmark, and Sweden too, had valuable ſettlements in the Antilles: and who would think of aſſerting that the poſſeſſors of Jamaica were the ſole rulers in this immenſe archipelago, or monopolized the trade between Europe and the Weſt Indies?

Was it otherwiſe on the continent of America? No: England, ſince the peace of 1783, had been confined to the moſt northern part of that continent, to an uncultivated, and, comparatively, poor and barren territory. The immenſe regions of South America, with their various treaſures

ſures on the ſurface and in the bowels of the earth, belonged to Spain and Portugal. In North America, all that did not belong to the United States on this ſide of the river St. Lawrence, was the property of France or Spain. With regard to extent of territory, and political weight and power, England was now hardly a ſtate of the third order in America.

It therefore clearly appears,

1ſt, That before the revolution, England was not the ſole poſſeſſor of European dominion in other quarters of the globe.

2dly, That France, England, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, and Sweden, enjoyed each of them ſome part of the European eſtabliſhments in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies; and that the ſhare poſſeſſed by England was far from being the greateſt, or even the moſt important with reſpect to its intrinſic value.

3dly, That the trade and produce, as well as the government of thoſe poſſeſſions, were divided among all the maritime powers; France, England, and Holland, however, having a decided ſuperiority over the reſt.

4thly, That if England, even before the revolution, poſſeſſed an aſcendant over her rivals in

the trade to the Eaſt and Weſt Indies (which with reſpect to France is by no means certain), the cauſes of that aſcendant are not to be found in an excluſive or even exceſſive dominion on her part, but muſt be derived from other ſources *.

Before we inquire into theſe, we muſt examine the changes which have happened in thoſe relations ſince the French revolution.

On the continent of America, no alteration has taken place. Excepting the ſmall diſtrict of Surinam, England has made no conqueſts; and France, Spain, Portugal, &c. have loſt none of their former poſſeſſions.

In the Weſt Indies, England has taken Martinique and ſome ſmaller iſlands from the French; Trinidad from the Spaniards; and from the Dutch the whole of their poſſeſſions. On the other hand, France has obtained the whole of St. Domingo, of which ſhe before only poſſeſſed the ſmaller, though the richeſt and beſt cultivated part. It is eaſy to foreſee, that at the enſuing peace, if France will conſent on her part to make ſome ſacrifices, England will have no great difficulty to give back the whole or the greater part of theſe conqueſts by

* Vide Note NN.

way

way of compenſation *. But even as the caſe now ſtands, the acquiſitions of France, territory for territory, and dominion for dominion, are at leaſt equal in importance to thoſe of England.

In the Eaſt Indies, indeed, the territorial empire of the Engliſh has been aggrandized in a great and important degree. On the one hand, the moſt valuable poſſeſſions of the Dutch, Ceylon, and the ſpice iſlands, have fallen under their dominion †; on the other hand, they have concluded a war, which has accompliſhed the ruin of the only Mogul prince yet poſſeſſing a regular power in the peninſula of Hindoſtan.

The firſt of theſe events has made England the ſole miſtreſs of the eaſtern ſeas: the laſt has eſtabliſhed her in the entire ſovereignty of the continent of India.

It is impoſſible to foreſee, at preſent, whether theſe things will continue thus, or whether they are to ſuffer many important changes (particu-

* Vide Note O O.

† This is preciſely what has happened. The reſtoration of theſe conqueſts has been a ſubject of complaint and outcry to a few anti-pacific declaimers in this country; but we here find an enlightened, and ſurely an impartial politician, predicting it as a matter of the greateſt probability, without imputing either folly or weakneſs to the Britiſh miniſtry.—TRANS.

larly with reſpect to the Dutch poſſeſſions) at the future peace between France and England. But however that may be, and whatever the changes that may then be made, the only queſtion now before us is this: How far is the general intereſt of Europe connected with the diviſion of power and territory, with the aſcendancy of this or that nation, in trans-European poſſeſſions?

If theſe poſſeſſions were, or ever could be, an immediate ſource of riches and power to the countries they belong to, their relations would be a ſubject of no ſmall importance to the ſyſtem of Europe. For, being then the inſtruments of conſiderable political influence, they might, according as they ſhould be concentrated or divided, immediately and eſſentially affect the general relations, and confirm, alter, or ſubvert the federal conſtitution. We ſhould then have to conſider them as provinces in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word, as real territorial aggrandizement of the mother-country; and the balance of Europe would be affected by the conqueſt of the Myſore or St. Domingo, as it now is by that of Holland or Italy.

Such, however, is not the nature of thoſe poſſeſſions. They never were an immediate ſource of revenue to any nation, and conſequently

quently never an immediate ſource of greatneſs and power *. The expenſes of their adminiſtration and defence, either conſume, or (which is more common) exceed what they produce. It is a well-known fact, that all Eaſt and Weſt India companies that have proceeded on the principle of territorial dominion, have ſpeedily met, or with difficulty averted their ruin. The fruitful and extenſive territory which now forms the United States of America, never produced ſo much to the Britiſh government as a ſingle ſquare mile in Great Britain. A haſty glance at the Eaſt India budget, laid before parliament every year by the Britiſh miniſtry, is ſufficient to ſhow, upon the beſt authority, the true value of India, conſidered as a territorial poſſeſſion. Theſe ſo much envied conquerors, the heirs and ſucceſſors of the Moguls, the rulers of thirty millions of men, and ſovereigns of the richeſt countries on the globe, three times as extenſive as their own country, are obliged to heap debt upon debt to comply with their expenſes; their yearly ſurplus is a *deficiency*; and their empire would be a dead weight upon Great Britain, if it did not nouriſh the vital principle of her greatneſs—her extenſive commerce. This is not a place to enter into a diſcuſſion of the cauſes of this remarkable phenomenon; they are not formed by particular rela-

* Vide Note P P.

tions,

tions, but lie deep in the nature of the thing itſelf, and in the neceſſary condition of every adminiſtration of lands remote from the centre of government; they will, in all times, and under all circumſtances, more or leſs, affect every trans-European territorial dominion.

Such dominion will not, therefore, of itſelf, procure any conſiderable influence in the political relations and affairs of Europe. As far as relates to the ſovereignty only, it is a matter of little moment, whether the Engliſh, the French, or the Dutch, excluſively, or altogether, or none of them, govern in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, in Africa, America, and all the iſlands of the ocean. It only becomes important as it ſtands connected with an advantage of another nature, which is that of commerce. It is commerce alone that can give ſufficient importance to theſe poſſeſſions to intereſt Europe. It is only by an extenſion of the whole, or ſome particular branches of its commerce, which it could not have effected otherwiſe, that any European nation can derive material power and influence in the general ſyſtem, from its dominions in diſtant quarters of the globe. The only caſe in which any ſtate can complain of the foreign poſſeſſions of another, is when the commerce derived from thoſe poſſeſſions only,

is

is in ſome way injurious or oppreſſive to other nations. Conſidered in a liberal point of view, all complaints againſt trans-European dominion, as ſuch, are nothing more than empty and unfounded declamations, ſuited only to minds entirely blinded by national prejudice.

How far the poſſeſſion of diſtant colonies, and the excluſive enjoyment of them, are even favourable to the commerce of a nation; whether it might not attain the ſame greatneſs without thoſe excluſive poſſeſſions, ſuppoſing the exiſtence in other reſpects of the materials and opportunities neceſſary to its riſe and progreſs; and whether in the caſes where it has flouriſhed in conjunction with them, that proſperity has been created by, or notwithſtanding them: theſe are important queſtions which I ſhall leave unexamined at preſent. I ſhall confine myſelf to the common ideas of the influence of foreign poſſeſſions upon the proſperity and increaſe of foreign commerce. I aſk whether, even according to theſe received ideas, the preſent greatneſs, or, as it is frequently called, the ſole preponderance of the Britiſh commerce, can, with any ſhow of reaſon, be attributed to the increaſe of its preſent foreign territory, derived from the events of the preſent war?

We have already ſeen, that it is only in the Eaſt Indies, that the poſſeſſions of the Engliſh have received any material augmentation. Their conqueſts in the Weſt Indies have not been ſufficiently important to throw any perceptible weight into the ſcale of their external commerce. If the preſent ſuperiority of their trade be founded upon the extent of their poſſeſſions, it muſt be explained by their acquiſitions in the Eaſt. The conqueſt of Tippoo Saib, and the capture of the Dutch ſettlements, muſt be made to account for the whole, or the greater part of it.

But it is ſcarcely poſſible that the effects of the conqueſt of the Myſore can yet be felt; and whoever is the leaſt acquainted with the ſituation of the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, will be far from believing that conqueſt to have made any material addition to its real wealth, or to have given any new vigour to its commerce. It was only in one reſpect valuable to the poſſeſſors of Bengal; it added to the ſecurity of their poſſeſſion. Like the reſt of her dominions in the Eaſt, it was not uſeful to Great Britain as an immediate ſource of wealth, but as an additional ſecurity to that extenſive commerce, which is one of the ſprings of England's greatneſs. That commerce might have exiſted without the poſſeſſion of thoſe immenſe regions;

a poſſeſſion only neceſſary, becauſe a falſe and barbarous policy has poiſoned the relations between India and Europe; becauſe the founders of all European eſtabliſhments there, of whatever nation, have followed no other maxims than thoſe of force and oppreſſion; and becauſe an unnatural dominion can only be maintained by unnatural means*. The conqueſt of the Myſore is therefore of little or no weight in explanation of the commercial preponderance in queſtion.

The acquiſition of Ceylon, the Moluccas, &c. is more intimately connected with it. But, if we conſider that this only increaſed the Britiſh commerce in one reſpect, which, though important in itſelf, is (compared with others) only a ſecondary branch of it, we ſhall be eaſily convinced that it is likewiſe inſufficient to ſolve the problem.

The preſent commercial ſuperiority of the Engliſh is the reſult of two principles unconnected with each other. The one of theſe exiſted *before* the revolution; the other owes its being to the *effects* of the revolution on all the other commercial ſtates of Europe.

* Vide Note Q Q.

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The incomparable activity of the Engliſh nation, the extent of its capital, its wonderful improvements in all kinds of machinery, the great expertneſs of its navigators, the labours of a government ſtudious of its real intereſts, the excellence of its internal conſtitution, its political and individual character; all theſe conſtitute the firſt and principal baſis of the aſcendant of its foreign commerce. This firſt and chief cauſe is entirely independent of all changes or revolutions in the reſt of the world. It was already amply diſplayed before the commencement of the preſent war: a concatenation of circumſtances to be explained in another place, prevented even the war from impeding its progreſs; which is one of the moſt extraordinary phenomena in the hiſtory of the commerce and civilization of nations.

To this firſt conſtituent principle of the commercial ſuperiority of Great Britain, a ſecond has been added in the courſe of the war; which, however, compared to the former, can only be called a negative cauſe. The nations which formerly divided the commerce of the world with England, were reduced to impotence and inactivity, by a ſeries of moſt deplorable misfortunes. The once ſo proſperous France beheld the ruin of her capital, her ma-

nufactories, her induſtry, her commerce, and her navigation, amidſt the convulſions of a ruinous anarchy. Deſolation was ſpread through her colonies; St. Domingo, the queen of the Antilles, was converted into an abode of miſery, a wilderneſs of blood and ruin! Holland was plunged in the devouring abyſs of an inſatiable revolution; the ſprings of her trade were dried up; many of her internal reſources were annihilated; her colonies and ſhipping were taken from her. One of thoſe unfortunate contradictions, which nothing could have produced but the *war of the revolution*, compelled the moſt powerful ally of this nation to take an active part in its deſtruction, to perſecute its trade in every ſea, and to take poſſeſſion of its moſt valuable poſſeſſions in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies. Spain, to avoid a greater evil, was obliged to throw herſelf into the arms of France; to engage with her in the war againſt England, to participate the ſuſpenſion of her commerce, the inſecurity of her navigation, the exhauſtion of her finances, and all the misfortunes by which France was for a time ſtruck out of the liſt of commercial nations. The maritime ſtates of the ſecond order, and above all, the United States of America*, made up, in ſome reſpects, for the defection

* The extenſive augmentation of the trade of America during this war, is too often overlooked. In latter years, her advancement

defection of France, Holland, and Spain; but they could not altogether ſupply their place; and by far the moſt conſiderable part of all trans-European commerce was concentrated in the hands of the Engliſh.

Thus gradually aroſe what is now called the monopoly of the colonial trade. The *intrinſic*, *peculiar*, *poſitive* ſuperiority of the Engliſh, which exiſted before the revolution, and had already then been the occaſion of ſome unjuſt and miſtaken complaints, was the firſt and chief ſource of this monopoly. Had it not been for that intrinſic ſuperiority of England's induſtry, all the maritime ſtates in Europe, their commerce, and their colonies, might have been ruined, without advancing her to her preſent commercial greatneſs: but poſſeſſing thoſe peculiar advantages, and, at the ſame time, the very extraordinary one of being able to preſerve the ſource and foundation of them, even in the midſt of war, England remained alone on the field when all her rivals had diſappeared. The misfortunes of other nations were the accidental occaſion, not the cauſe, of a greater,

advancement in general commerce has even been more remarkable than her great improvements in many other branches of public wealth. The trade of America to the Eaſt Indies has been carried to ſuch an extent as to render it probable that ſhe will ſoon be a formidable rival of England in that career.

perhaps only more evident, diſplay of the principles of her power.

Suppoſing that which is arbitrarily and abſurdly termed monopoly and tyranny, to be a poſitive evil for other nations (and we ſhall ſoon inquire whether it really is ſo), it would neverthelefs ſtill be inequitable, and ridiculous indeed, to treat this monopoly as a crime of the Engliſh people; as injuſtice, treachery, and uſurpation on the part of the Britiſh government. The firſt principle of the Btitiſh commercial aſcendant, the true and immediate cauſe of it, will ſurely not be a ſubject of ſerious reproach to the nation which thereby acquired ſuch advantages, or to the government that cheriſhed and encouraged it: and England can never be made reſponſible for the ſecond, which was only the accidental occaſion of extending, or at leaſt of manifeſting that long determined ſuperiority. England neither deſired nor effected the French revolution, nor the horrors of her internal convulſions, nor the ruin of the French colonies, nor the ſubverſion of the late conſtitution of Holland, nor the alliance between Spain and France. To what is called the monopoly of the commerce of the world, ſhe only contributed that part for which nobody can reproach her; the reſt was accompliſhed by circumſtances which England could neither foreſee, nor direct, nor avert.

But

But in order to judge how far England's monopoly of colonial produce is really prejudicial to other nations, we muſt carefully diſtinguiſh its effects on the commercial ſtates, from its conſequences to the conſuming part of Europe only.

The nations actively engaged in the colonial trade before the revolution, are neceſſarily ſufferers by the preſent ſtate of things. One of the moſt important branches of their induſtry, is entirely cut off; and many others, more or leſs connected with it, are conſiderably ſtraitened. The ſudden deſtruction of their colonial ſyſtems, not only affected their foreign commerce and navigation, but was a ſevere check upon their internal manufactures, and the circulation of money; it diminiſhed all the ſources of private wealth, and many of the ſprings of public power. To them the preſent ſtate of things is a ſerious, important, and, in ſome reſpects, an irreparable misfortune. To them the former competition was not only advantageous, but neceſſary, and to them it may well be permitted to repreſent the re-eſtabliſhment of that competition as an object of the firſt and greateſt importance.

But very different is the caſe with reſpect to that conſiderable part of Europe—the conſumers only of colonial produce. All that immediately intereſts theſe nations, is the facility of pro-

curing thoſe productions at the loweſt price. In itſelf, it is indifferent to them whether the Eaſt and Weſt Indian ſettlements, and their commerce and produce, are divided among many, or confined to one nation. The firſt is only advantageous to them when it enſures a lower price at the market; and the latter is only prejudicial when it occaſions an arbitrary riſe in the value of the produce.

It is rather generally believed in Europe, that thoſe circumſtances which in the courſe of the war have put the Engliſh in excluſive poſſeſſion of the colonial trade, have at the ſame time empowered that nation to exerciſe an oppreſſive monopoly towards the reſt of Europe in the ſale of that produce. This opinion was probably created by the declamations of thoſe, who were inſtigated againſt England by an intereſt of a different nature—the loſs of their active part of the trade. It was foſtered by political animoſities, by hoſtile prejudices and hoſtile artifices; by the evident and uniform bias of moſt of the writers of theſe times, and by the prevailing temper of the public mind. This opinion, likewiſe, received a tinge of probability from the extraordinary riſe in the price of colonial produce, which happened at the very time when that preponderance, or, as people chooſe to call it, that deſpotiſm of the Engliſh was eſtabliſhed; and it received its final confirmation from the apparently

parently infallible concluſions, that, as in any ſingle market the competition of ſellers is the neceſſary cauſe of cheapneſs, and the monopoly of a few, the occaſion of the reverſe; ſo likewiſe in the general market of Europe, the concurrence of ſelling nations muſt diminiſh the prices, while an arbitrary increaſe of them muſt inevitably enſue from a monopoly in the hands of one ſtate *.

The following reaſons induce me to regard this opinion as fallacious, however generally it may be received.

In the firſt place, I conceive it to be impoſſible, that a whole people ſhould form ſuch an agreement as would be abſolutely neceſſary to enable them to affix an arbitrary price to any object of their trade. A commercial nation is only a multitude of trading individuals; and each of theſe, in his traffic with foreign or domeſtic purchaſers, obeys the maxims ſuggeſted by his own immediate intereſt. Every individual is the natural competitor of all the reſt. If an hundred perſons in one commercial ſtate were actually to conſpire together to eſtabliſh an arbitrary and artificial price in every market, there would always be found an hundred others, who would be willing, for the ſake of a more extenſive ſale, to confine themſelves to a ſmaller profit; and this would deſtroy

* Vide Note R R,

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the effect of ſuch monopolizing combinations, and reſtore to the article ſo unreaſonably raiſed, its fair price—the original value of the produce, with the charge of conveyance, and the uſual profit of the trader. That any monopoly ſhould enable all the individuals of a commercial ſtate to impoſe arbitrary prices upon their purchaſers in every market of Europe, is a chimera that will not bear a moment's examination. Even ſuppoſing the government of a commercial nation to be ſo blind and ſenſeleſs, as to put every branch of its external commerce into the hands of excluſive, and really monopolizing companies; even in this, by no means probable caſe, the favoured companies would, in the end, find it impoſſible to maintain an arbitrary price in the objects of their monopoly *. In ſuch a caſe, the ſyſtem of ſmuggling would ſoon be carried to ſuch an immenſe extent, as to compel the monopoliſts to lower their prices, or to forego their advantages altogether. My own opinion, ſupported and confirmed by much reflection on the ſubject, is, that in the intercourſe among nations there can be no ſuch thing as a monopoly, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word.

2dly. The great riſe which has taken place in the prices of all Eaſt and Weſt Indian produce, within the laſt ten years, is ſo fully and ſatisfac-

* Vide Note S S.

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torily explained by a number of obvious cauſes, as to invalidate completely the aſſumption of its having been effected by a national monopoly. If, beſides the conſtant and neceſſary advancement in the price of all articles of proviſion (including, of courſe, trans-European produce) which takes place in the ordinary courſe of things, we conſider the extraordinary circumſtances which have tended, ſince the revolution and the war, to increaſe the value of colonial produce; if we conſider the calamities which have befallen the richeſt colonies; the ruin of induſtry, and the deſtruction of capital in ſo many of the ſtates of Europe, and the effect of theſe misfortunes upon the productive power of all nations; if we conſider the dangers of navigation, which increaſe the price of inſurance, and leſſen the profits of the merchant, even in the moſt powerful maritime countries; and the great maſs of real ſubſtantial wealth diverted by the war from productive objects in England as well as in the reſt of afflicted Europe: all theſe circumſtances will be ſufficient to account for the high prices of colonial produce as their natural and neceſſary conſequence. The preſent profit of the Engliſh trader on the ſale of this produce, is certainly no greater than it uſed it to be twenty years ago: there is even reaſon to believe that it is leſs. The Weſt India merchants of London have twice been obliged, in the courſe of the preſent war, to apply for aſ-

 ſiſtance

ſiſtance to their government, which advanced conſiderable ſums, to relieve their preſſing difficulties. The Eaſt India Company has rather added to its debts than its riches. The two claſſes, therefore, which muſt alone, or above all others, have profited by the high price of Eaſt aad Weſt India produce, if that price had been dictated by an arbitrary monopoly, have in reality derived no ſuch extraordinary advantages from it, and have, perhaps, found it difficult even to ſecure their ordinary gains.

The only reſpect in which it is at all important to the conſumers, whether they be provided with colonial produce by this or that European people, is the degree of induſtry and wealth of the nation they have to deal with. Among nations equal in other reſpects, the richeſt and moſt induſtrious will always ſell at the loweſt price. For the greater the capitals, the more active the induſtry, the more perfect the art and ability employed in any buſineſs, ſo much the more productive does it prove, ſo much the more ſpeedy and certain the reſult, ſo much leſs exertion proportionably devoted to it, and ſo much leſs the equivalent required from the conſumer. The productions of the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, in the markets of Europe, are fruits of the navigation, the capital, the labour, and ingenuity of the nations which bring them thither. In all theſe points the Britiſh people ſtands unrivalled.

No

No nation can procure, tranſport, and, of courſe, ſell ſo cheap as the Engliſh. As far as others poſſeſs not the ſame advantages and reſources to enable them to ſell at the ſame prices, and as long as they continue incapable of ſo doing; ſo far and ſo long muſt the commercial predominance of the Engliſh, or what is improperly termed their commercial monopoly, remain a manifeſt advantage to the conſumer, in every part of Europe*. This appears to me ſo clearly founded upon the ſimpleſt principles of political economy, that I am at a loſs to gueſs what the moſt prejudiced ſophiſtry will be able to oppoſe to it.

Thus have we analyzed the ſecond charge againſt England, the accuſation of monopoly; and we find,

1ſt, That before the French revolution, England was ſo far from poſſeſſing excluſive dominion in America or the Indies, that ſhe did not even preponderate in the Weſt Indies or on the adjoining continent; while in the Eaſt ſhe was nearly balanced by the Dutch, French, Portugueſe, Danes, &c. who all of them held more or leſs conſiderable poſſeſſions there.

* Vide Note T T.

2dly,

2dly, Since the revolution in France and Holland, the territorial dominions of Great Britain have been extended in every part of the globe; in the Eaſt Indies almoſt to excluſive ſovereignty; but, in the Weſt Indies, not even to preponderance. How many of theſe additions will be permanent, remains yet to be decided by the enſuing peace.

3dly, But neither the territorial poſſeſſions of the Engliſh before the revolution, nor their conqueſts during the war, are ſufficient to account for the extent of their almoſt excluſive commerce in Eaſt and Weſt India produce. This muſt be referred to other cauſes, among which ſome are peculiar advantages which no man has a right to make a ſubject of reproach to England; others are diſorders and calamities which England in no wiſe occaſioned, and from which ſhe derived an accidental benefit too dearly purchaſed on another ſide.

4thly, Her monopoly of trans-European productions, ſo far as it exiſts, is only immediately prejudicial to thoſe nations who formerly took an active part in general commerce. To all the reſt, to the great maſs of mere conſumers, it could only be hurtful if the prices of thoſe productions were thereby conſiderably raiſed.

Since

Since this neither is, nor can be the caſe; ſince, under the preſent circumſtances, the Engliſh are the people from whom the conſumer may expect the moſt moderate price; this ſo much decried monopoly of Eaſt and Weſt India commerce, which at all events would be a matter of indifference, is now even an advantage to him.

Far be it from me to aſſert, that it is unimportant to Europe whether France, Spain, Holland, and every other ſtate whoſe induſtry has been fettered or impeded by the revolution or the war, ſhall recover the uſe and poſſeſſion of their former ſtrength, or continue to languiſh in that inactivity to which their preſent ſtate condemns them. The true intereſt of Europe conſiſts in the greateſt poſſible proſperity of every one of its component parts, and the higheſt poſſible degree of wealth in all agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial nations. It requires likewiſe, and muſt, under every poſſible circumſtance, require that every nation ſhould poſſeſs that ſhare (and, if poſſible, neither more nor leſs) of the maſs of general wealth, including Eaſt and Weſt India commerce and produce, which belongs to its particular ſituation, the nature of its induſtry, its diſpoſition and capacity; and which is neceſſary for the

the developement of its various productive powers. In this point of view, not only the philanthropic cosmopolite, but the enlightened statesman, if he be acquainted with the general principles of political economy, will desire that every country, qualified for maritime pursuits, may enjoy its due proportion of trans-European commerce and dominion. But we must not confound this just and liberal policy with the false though common views, which form the groundwork of all the complaints against the commercial superiority of England. This enlarged consideration of the subject is unknown to those who join in those complaints: were it generally understood, the declamations against England would long since have been silenced.

III. *Of the Monopoly of English Manufactures.*

The colonial trade of the English, notwithstanding its magnitude, is only a secondary object in the general mass of British industry. Its own manufactures are by far the most fruitful source of that part of the power and riches of this nation which is derived from commerce.

After having endeavoured to point out the real nature of the colonial monopoly of the English, and to show with how little justice the commercial

commercial ſuperiority of Great Britain can in that reſpect be termed tyrannically oppreſſive, or even prejudicial to other nations: I have only now to examine whether ſuch complaints are better founded when applied to the dealings of the Engliſh in their own manufactures.

The Author of the *Etat de la France*, and a thouſand writers beſides, have deſcribed the preference obtained by the Engliſh manufactures in every market of Europe, as an inſupportable yoke, a painful and humiliating ſervitude to all other nations. It is only by the impoveriſhment of Europe, ſay they, that England riſes to an unnatural degree of wealth; as this wealth increaſes, the power is likewiſe augmented of ſtraitening, confirming, and perpetuating the galling and opprobrious fetters in which all governments and countries languiſh in helpleſs inactivity. The annihilation of independence in induſtry, leads to the deſtruction of all liberty: the commercial ſovereignty of the Engliſh is made the foundation of their political deſpotiſm, and England becomes more and more the lawgiver and tyrant of Europe.

A very ſlight examination of this unfavourable picture is ſufficient to ſhow, that the grounds of complaint upon which it is founded,

are in many reſpects equivocal, arbitrary, abſurd, and untenable. The decided and almoſt excluſive preference given to Engliſh manufactures in the markets of Europe, is not the effect of compulſion, but of choice; it is a preference freely given, continued, and confirmed; for England has no means of introducing her productions, and putting them off by force in any part of Europe. Were the ſucceſs of theſe productions as deſtructive to the induſtry, and as conducive to the degradation and dependance of all other countries as it is here deſcribed, it would be impoſſible to conceive why ſo many nations ſubmitted to a yoke they might at any time throw off. For, ſuppoſing obſtinate prejudices, or unaccountable faſcination, to poſſeſs the people, would not their governments uſe every effort to bar the acceſs of this conſuming poiſon to their dominions?

The force of theſe arguments muſt ſtrike the meaneſt capacity, although it were unable to diſtinguiſh the relations of cauſe and effect in a great regular phenomenon; and it is not a little ſurpriſing that ſuch obvious conſiderations ſhould not long ſince have deſtroyed all the flimſy tiſſues of ſophiſtry.

Upon

Upon theſe complaints of the tyrannous oppreſſion connected with the induſtry of the Britiſh nation, it naturally occurs to aſk, how does this induſtry, ſo deteſted and abhorred, this pretended cauſe of ſuch misfortunes, ſuch miſery and ruin to the reſt of Europe, how does it maintain ſo peaceably its once acquired prerogative? Why do not all governments and individuals combine to exclude the manufactures of Great Britain from every market; and thus by one manly effort break through the fetters that encumber them? The anſwer is obvious—their intereſt forbids it; for though they have no diſtinct conception of the nature of that intereſt, there is a vague ſentiment of advantage which impels them more powerfully than the viſionary hypotheſes of prejudice or ignorance. Let us now endeavour to develope this vague ſentiment; let us diveſt it of the obſcurity in which it is involved.

The ſuperiority of Great Britain in European manufacture, like her aſcendant in colonial commerce, is founded upon two diſtinct principles, one poſitive and the other negative.

The firſt is the intrinſic excellence of the productions of her induſtry; in other words, the reſult of the peculiar advantages by which Eng-

land is enabled, with leſs effort than other nations, to prepare manufactures of equal goodneſs, or with the ſame application of labour to deliver them better, by which means ſhe brings her articles to market at a lower price when equally good, at the ſame price when ſuperior in quality, and very often both more perfect and more cheap. The reaſon of this intrinſic and peculiar excellence of Britiſh manufactures is obvious; it is owing to the progreſs of every art among the Engliſh, to the extenſive uſe and improvement of machinery, to the largeneſs of their capitals, to the ingenuity and enterpriſing ſpirit of the people; it is a conſequence of the character and habits, the polity and conſtitution of the nation, which all contribute to produce and ſecure thoſe advantages.

The negative principle of this aſcendant is the comparative weakneſs and indolence of other nations, their ignorance of political economy, their neglect of many branches of induſtry, and their neceſſary dependance on the activity of foreigners; all, more or leſs, conſequences of their own faults.

The demand for Britiſh manufactures in the moſt cultivated countries of Europe, and among nations which have likewiſe carried induſtry to great

great perfection, is a conſequence and proof of the poſitive ſuperiority of that of the Engliſh. It is by that alone they have acquired, and do ſtill retain, the markets of Germany, of moſt of the northern powers, and of France before and ſince the revolution.

Upon this, which I have called the negative ſuperiority of the Engliſh, is founded the aſcendant of their induſtry in Portugal, and more eſpecially in Ruſſia. It is not merely in the ſhape of commercial intercourſe that it prevails in thoſe countries; it is there internally productive. There Britiſh adventurers, with Britiſh capital and Britiſh labour, engage in the domeſtic trade, and develope the interior reſources of the country: there they eſtabliſh manufactories on their own account. Ruſſia and Portugal would not, however, exclude the Engliſh from their markets by the mere improvement of their native induſtry; for were they as highly cultivated as France and Germany, they would ſtill, like France and Germany, prefer the produce of Britiſh labour even to their own, on account of its peculiar excellence. But the excluſive prevalence of the manufactures, and direct interference of the merchants of England, in the interior of thoſe countries: this multiplication of their natural advantages can only proceed

from particular defects of conſtitution or errors of government.

As far as the predominance of Britiſh manufactures is a conſequence of real, intrinſic excellence and comparative cheapneſs, it is clearly a poſitive advantage to every nation, and to civil ſociety in general, as well as to England. It is the intereſt of every individual in Europe to procure the commodities he wants from the quarter where they are to be found at once the beſt and the cheapeſt.

It is every man's intereſt (which no one will miſtake if left to himſelf) to purchaſe articles of merchandiſe at a lower price in another country, rather than pay dearer for the ſame productions at home; and the advantage is immenſe when he can procure them at once better and cheaper from a foreigner than from his own countrymen. The gains of all the individuals conſtitute the advantage of the whole community. The true intereſt of a nation is always to ſupply its ſeveral wants by the ſmalleſt poſſible expenſe of labour and capital. The greater its economy in theſe reſpects, the more wants will it be able to ſatisfy, and the greater will be the ſurplus to be applied in augmentation of its poſitive wealth, and towards the furtherance of its productive

powers.

powers. When the foreign commerce of a nation is governed by theſe principles (and they are its only groundwork in the natural courſe of things), it is always beneficial and productive. The intereſt of particular claſſes may ſometimes be at variance with them; but the advantage of the whole (even of the individuals of thoſe very claſſes, when conſidered as a part of the general maſs) is inſeparably connected with them. Manufacturers and tradeſmen, and ſtateſmen who believe them, may continue to imagine that a nation is impoveriſhed by receiving the manufactures of another; but unprejudiced ſenſe will ſuſpect (and a true knowledge of the ſources of general wealth will confirm it), that every branch of trade, be it where it will, if produced by an actual improvement of human induſtry, is beneficial to every nation concerned, as well to the purchaſers as the ſellers. Manufacturers and tradeſmen, and ſtateſmen influenced by them, firſt raiſed the preſent clamour about the dependance of Europe and the aſcendant of Britiſh induſtry; the political enemies of England eagerly took advantage of a clamour ſo welcome to them; what thoſe had only termed dependance, theſe inveighed againſt as an intolerable yoke; what thoſe only deplored as a lamentable error, theſe writers deſcribed as the

laſt degree of weakneſs and abaſement. Ignorance produced theſe abſurdities; prejudice and fraud diſſeminated them: and, the ſcarcity of juſt ideas concerning the true principles of political economy, has rendered ignorance and paſſion triumphant in an age ſo enlightened in other reſpects, and ſo juſtly proud of its attainments.

As far as the ſuperiority of Britiſh induſtry is actually founded on the weakneſs or negligence of other nations, on the errors of their political or mercantile ſyſtem; ſo far does it reſt upon a cauſe not only detrimental to the countries it diſgraces, but prejudicial in its effects to every nation, and to all civil ſociety: for the intereſt of the whole requires the utmoſt poſſible improvement of the powers and reſources of every nation. If Ruſſia and Portugal employ Engliſh capitals and Engliſh hands in their internal manufactures, it is a proof of ſome great defect in the ſyſtem of their domeſtic induſtry, or an abſolute faultineſs in their political conſtitutions. To ſupply the one, or to amend the other, would not only be beneficial to thoſe immediately concerned; but every nation in Europe would feel the advantage, in as much as there is a general connexion between the productive powers of the whole.

But

But until ſuch radical amendments ſhall take place, it is a clear and undeniable advantage not only to thoſe countries that employ the labour and capitals of ſtrangers, but to the whole ſyſtem of European induſtry, that the means and reſources of England ſhould ſupply the deficiency of others. It would be a much greater misfortune if thoſe fields of human induſtry which are now cultivated and enlivened by Britiſh ſkill and capital, were to remain waſte and unproductive. That would be a poſitive, the preſent is only a relative evil; is only ſuch as far as it proceeds from a ſtate of things that is itſelf evil; in every other ſenſe it is an advantage.

This analyſis will enable us eaſily to determine how far the complaints againſt the aſcendant of Britiſh induſtry are well or ill founded on the one hand, and, on the other, how far the means by which it appears poſſible to controvert this ſuperiority, are ſalutary or pernicious.

Theſe complaints, as far as they relate to the faulty inactivity, the weakneſs, and bad adminiſtration of the countries which England has made tributary to her induſtry, are in a certain degree well founded; while on the other hand they

they are ill underſtood in many reſpects, and at all events highly unjuſt when made matter of accuſation againſt England. They are well founded as far as that intrinſic inferiority which prevents a people from cultivating its peculiar reſources, betrays a defective or miſguided national economy, which muſt always be a real misfortune: they are ill underſtood, ſo far as, in ſuch a ſtate of things, the acceſſion of foreign induſtry is the only ſuccedaneum, and of courſe muſt be an advantage even to the nation that wants the aſſiſtance; they are unjuſt as charges againſt England, becauſe England can never be made reſponſible for the barbariſm, the indolence, the unſkilfulneſs, the natural difficulties, or the bad adminiſtration of other countries; becauſe England can never be blamed for profiting, to the utmoſt, in every lawful manner, by her arts, her induſtry, and ſpirit of enterpriſe, whenever ſhe finds a field for them; and becauſe this mode of ſupplying the deficiency of induſtry in one country by its abundance in another, is not only beneficial to the nations receiving the aſſiſtance, but evidently advantageous to all.

But when theſe complaints are grounded upon the intrinſic merits of England's ſuperior induſtry, they are not only extremely unjuſt, but

but in the higheſt degree abſurd. The peculiar excellence of Great Britain in this reſpect, is a general advantage to all nations, if meaſured by the true principles of political economy.

All Europe is extremely intereſted in the exiſtence of a people among whom induſtry and ingenuity have been carried to ſo wonderful an extent; by whom numerous objects of general conſumption are provided comparatively cheap and of excellent quality; and whoſe aſtoniſhing activity affords a ſtriking, and not always fruitleſs example to other countries. The commercial greatneſs of England is, in all theſe important reſpects, a manifeſt advantage to Europe. How could it, on theſe very grounds, be made a ſubject of complaint? By the ſame rules we may judge of the fitneſs or unworthineſs of any method that could be adopted for reducing the preſent ſuperiority of Great Britain.

Every indirect diminution of this ſuperiority, by promoting induſtry in thoſe nations where it has hitherto been wanting, muſt contribute, not only to the proſperity of the ſtates thus animated, but to the welfare of all Europe. The loſs ſuſtained by England in conſequence of ſuch a diminution of her commercial and artificial

ficial ſuperiority, would be only apparent, while the benefit accruing to the reſt would be real and eſſential.

Every direct diminution of this aſcendant of Great Britain, by poſitively reducing her productive ſtrength, would be prejudicial, not only to England, but to the general welfare of Europe. The advantage to other nations, of ſuch a diminution, would be merely apparent, while the loſs ſuſtained by England, and all countries at once, would be real and eſſential.

The utmoſt poſſible improvement of the productive powers of every nation; the utmoſt poſſible extenſion of the riches, arts, and induſtry of each; is the real intereſt of the whole of Europe. If thoſe who hitherto have employed the men and money of other countries to cultivate their natural reſources, would now apply their own activity to the ſame objects, the happy change would be the occaſion of a poſitive increaſe of the general produce of labour. For the ſum of foreign induſtry, formerly employed on what they would now themſelves accompliſh, would not be loſt becauſe deprived of one field of action; it would explore a new one, and there diſcover other ſources of wealth; it would make ſome further addition to the riches

of the world. The loſs is therefore only apparent, which any civilized and induſtrious nation ſuſtains by the elevation of others. It is the intereſt of England as well as of Europe in general, that induſtry and wealth ſhould be increaſed in every corner of the globe in the higheſt poſſible degree. It is not the barbariſm and poverty of other nations, but their riches and civilization, that can add to the wealth of Britain. If England were actually to impede the induſtry of other countries by force or fraud, ſhe would deſerve every reproach that could be heaped upon an oppreſſor; then, but only then, would ſhe ſtand in direct oppoſition to the wiſhes, endeavours, rights, and intereſts of all other nations, the common enemy, the tyrant, and the ſcourge of Europe.

But may our better genius, may the dictates of true political economy reſtrain us from ſeeking any general advantage in the immediate degradation of England; from ſuch inverted policy, conceived by many a narrow mind to be the height of wiſdom! To weaken England would be to weaken Europe. The riches and induſtry of that nation belong to all other countries. The thirty millions of manufactures which England yearly adds to the commercial ſtock of Europe, form a great and important portion of

the

the wealth of nations. Were theſe even in part to diſappear, what would become of the very advantageous market which England preſents to all the natural productions, the grain, the wines, the metals, the wood, &c. of the continent? There would be a loſs of labour, in as much as a greater quantity muſt then be employed to produce the ſame maſs of neceſſaries, by a leſs perfect induſtry. The activity and induſtry excited by Britiſh capital in every commercial ſpot, and thence diffuſed over every ſea, river, and province of the remoteſt regions of the world, would be then no more. Hence a moſt important loſs, which it would be impoſſible to prevent or remedy. The ſhort-ſighted jealouſy of a manufacturer, a merchant, or the ſtateſman who adopts their narrow views, may graft the hope of its own advantage upon the project of humbling England; Europe would have no cauſe to rejoice if their chimerical hopes were even realized. That change is repreſented as a neceſſary ſtep towards a general emancipation, by the ſophiſtical enemies of England, and awaited with impatience by their ignorant and credulous followers: but a due conſideration of the true intereſts of Europe will ſet it in a very different light.

The Author of the *Etat de la France* has laid down five conditions, which, in his opinion, are the

the neceſſary baſis of the deliverance of all nations from the hated ſuperiority of Great Britain. By attending to the principles above explained, we ſhall be able to judge with ſome confidence, how far the meaſures propoſed are, in themſelves, deſirable, or adapted to their object. He conceives it to be neceſſary,

1ſt, That the war be terminated.

2dly, That the commercial relations of the European powers be regulated by better treaties.

3dly, That a better ſyſtem be founded on the treaties, that ſhall hereafter define their ſeveral rights and obligations.

4thly, That the interior adminiſtration of every ſtate be regulated by wiſer maxims, and upon better principles.

5thly, That governments, always attentive to the progreſs and revolutions of general commerce, ſhould proceed accordingly in the improvement of their political relations.

Theſe rules of reform are not laid down with uncommon perſpicuity or preciſion: but it is nevertheleſs eaſy to gueſs their meaning and tendency.

With

With reſpect to the reſtoration of peace, it is certain beyond all doubt, that a true peace that is, a ſecure and permanent one, if under the preſent circumſtances it could be attained, would eſſentially ameliorate the condition of every nation. But ſhould this ſo much deſired peace lead to the diminution of England's commercial ſuperiority, or, as it is ſo often called, to the deliverance of Europe from the yoke of Britain's tyranny; ſhould ſuch be the ſpecific object of the new ſyſtem of political and commercial relations to be eſtabliſhed by it; then its effects muſt either be prejudicial to England alone, and advantageous to the reſt of Europe only, or muſt at leaſt be beneficial to England in a leſs degree than to other countries. I know very well that it is the general opinion that the preſent war has been a ſource of the greateſt advantages to England; that it is almoſt neceſſary to her exiſtence, and that the moment of its termination will bring with it the inevitable fall of her commercial greatneſs. But, however general this opinion may be, it is a groſs and unpardonable error*. I ſhall have an opportunity in a ſucceeding chapter, of expoſing its whole weakneſs: at preſent I will only aſſert, as an incontrovertible truth, which I mean to prove

* Vide Note U U.

hereafter,

hereafter, that England (excepting all unforeſeen misfortunes), far from being lowered by the peace, muſt, in the moſt eſſential reſpects, be a greater gainer by it than any other nation. The re-eſtabliſhment of peace will therefore either make no alteration in the commercial relations between England and the reſt of Europe, or certainly not ſuch as this author, who ſo paſſionately inveighs againſt them, has promiſed to himſelf and the world.

An amendment of the interior adminiſtration of every ſtate, a wiſe and liberal legiſlation, an increaſed attention to the intereſts of commerce and induſtry, and a ſtudious improvement of the true ſources of the wealth of nations: theſe are propoſals of reform in the domeſtic ſyſtem of Europe, which undoubtedly deſerve the approbation of every reflecting mind, and of every friend to humanity. Bleſſed be the government that adopts them in their whole extent! Honour and praiſe to every writer whoſe energetic eloquence can rouſe from their lethargic indifference, thoſe who have hitherto neglected or refuſed to follow them! With ſuch weapons, but with ſuch only, may Europe combat Great Britain! The reſult of the conteſt, however, will not ſatisfy the deteſtable deſires of envy; nor the fooliſh and per-

verſe expectations of an ignorant mercantile policy—a ſelf-deſtroying thirſt after unattainable enjoyments. The riſe of other nations to greater perfection would not deſtroy the commercial ſuperiority of England. Every country would then feel its peculiar advantages: each would diſplay its powers by an independent, unreſtrained, and beneficial activity, in the order, manner, and degree preſcribed by its nature and ſituation. The greatneſs and power of each would reſt upon its own ſtrength, and upon the ſtrength and proſperity of the whole. But the general riſe of Europe would not occaſion the fall of England. It would then ſcarcely be conceived by enlightened men, how it could ever have been thought that the riches or poverty of one nation, could be founded upon the poverty or riches of another.

Had the Author of the *Etat de la France* confined himſelf to ſuch propoſals, there would have been no reaſon to doubt the juſtneſs, the purity, the benevolence of his views. But adhering to his falſe premiſes, he has mixed theſe propoſals with others more doubtful and equivocal. "The commercial connexions of nations are to be founded upon better regulations;" "Their rights and obligations are to be defined by better treaties." Wherein theſe better treaties and wiſer combinations

combinations are to conſiſt, remains totally unexplained; but the ſecret aim and true character of his propoſals are betrayed, not only by numerous expreſſions in various parts of his work, and the general tendency of his politics, but by his explanation of what he himſelf calls the moſt important article, which is an undefined recommendation of a new political ſyſtem of commercial relations. He thinks nothing more is requiſite than a "ſingle ray of light, to ſhow to a few princes and their miniſters, the real cauſes of their political and commercial dependance, and the true principle of their deliverance;" and he adds, "The preſent ſtate of things might be immediately changed by the energy of one great power, and that power is FRANCE."

From theſe declarations, it is evident he did not expect the improvement of European induſtry, the deliverance of commerce, the proſperity and independence of all nations, either entirely or principally from the reformation of interior adminiſtrations, the freedom of trade, the improvement of domeſtic polity, or the wiſdom of governments. Such truly beneficial cauſes operate ſlowly, and in regular progreſſion. The mere reſolution of a few princes, or the energy of a ſingle power, may inſtantly alter the courſe of things,

and change the nature of all relations. It is evident that he looks to ſimple, bold, and deciſive political meaſures, for what he calls the deliverance of Europe; and that he ſeeks to exalt France, and Europe eventually with France, by weakening or deſtroying the foundation of Britain's greatneſs, by means of certain combinations, which he conceals for the preſent, though they are eaſily diſcovered. His favourite object therefore is, the immediate degradation of England; which, according to the principles above explained, is ſufficient to warrant his condemnation.

I conceive that the foregoing obſervations have nearly fulfilled the object I had in view. My deſign was to rectify the prevailing opinion, with reſpect to the dangers and evils ariſing from the commercial ſuperiority of England. I flatter myſelf I have ſufficiently proved that neither the maritime ſtatutes of Great Britain (I ſpeak of her domeſtic regulations), nor what is called the Britiſh monopoly of colonial produce, nor the indiſputable ſuperiority of her manufactures, afford any real or juſt cauſe of accuſation or complaint. In my inquiry into theſe complaints, I have uniformly adhered to thoſe principles, which every enlightened

enlightened mind now reverences with unqualified aſſent; which alone can lead to the perfection of political economy; and from which Europe has to expect the moſt important improvements in every branch of general welfare. On theſe indiſputable principles, it is evident that what the ignorant multitude, inſtigated by ſophiſtical declaimers, decry as the commercial tyranny of the Engliſh, is in reality a moſt eſſential part of the wealth, an active principle of the induſtry, and a fruitful ſource of the preſent and future riches of all nations; that the only method of diminiſhing the ſuperiority of Britiſh induſtry, which can be recommended or admitted, is the promotion and encouragement of the ſame activity in other countries, which would benefit the whole without injuring England; and that every project for actually deſtroying the foundations of Britain's power and commercial greatneſs, by direct and violent attempts upon it, muſt ultimately prove its author an enemy to the general welfare of Europe.

There is therefore nothing in England's commercial ſyſtem, and in the influence of that ſyſtem upon the welfare of other nations, which can ſupport or juſtify the heavy charges brought againſt her. In her peaceful relations, we ſee

her in conſtant and perfect harmony with the domeſtic intereſts of the ſocial ſyſtem of Europe. If ſhe have in any way deſerved the reproaches of her numerous adverſaries, the cauſes muſt be ſought in other relations; they muſt be founded on her conduct in war, towards countries not immediately engaged in it; and on the abuſe of her well-earned ſuperiority in her oppreſſion of the weak. How far they really are ſo, will be diſcuſſed in a ſequel to the preſent work.

NOTES.

NOTES.

NOTE A, p. 6.

IN the language of the Germans, which is characterized by the ſame ſpirit of minute diſcrimination and elaborate analyſis that pervades their philoſophy, the term *public law* has a more general and abſtract ſignification than is here intended to be given to it. In order to avoid all ambiguity, I will therefore define its meaning in the preſent work. It is intended to repreſent the law of nations in its practical, and not in its theoretical, or what is commonly called its natural ſenſe; and the words *federal ſyſtem* or *conſtitution*, *political ſyſtem*, &c. are to be regarded as ſignifying the ſame thing as often as they occur in the following ſheets.—AUTHOR.

The above note is ſtill more neceſſary to an Engliſh than a German reader; for without it there would be an obſcurity from the uſe of thoſe phraſes pervading the whole work. The term *federal conſtitution* properly ſignifies, and is commonly uſed to denote ſuch a league between independent ſtates, as formed the Swiſs and Dutch republics; it is here made to comprehend the whole ſyſtem of political relations, and the uſages which

regulate the conduct of ſtates in their tranſactions with foreign powers.

The *jus gentium*, or law of nations, as it has hitherto been received, is compoſed of a traditional and cuſtomary, as well as a poſitive code. But the political writers on the part of France, finding the doctrines of all the great authors of the laſt century, more favourable to the Britiſh, than to their own ſyſtem, have lately been labouring with conſummate art, to ſet aſide their authority, and to perſuade mankind that there neither has been, nor can be, any law of nations not expreſsly eſtabliſhed by treaty.—TRANS.

NOTE B, p. 26.

THE treaty of 1756 has been a favourite topic of declamation for all the decriers of the old political ſyſtem, from Favier to the Author of a work, intitled, *Coup d'Œil politique ſur l'Europe* (in 2 vols. 1800); and I muſt confeſs it gave me a favourable opinion of the writer whoſe work is now before me, that, ſo far from deſcribing that treaty as one of the cauſes of the revolution, he has not even mentioned it in the courſe of his work. His ſilence induces me to conclude that his opinion is the ſame as mine on that head.

The above note was written before I had ſeen Segur's edition of Favier, in which many valuable additions have been made to the original work. I think this is the firſt French publication in which the treaty of 1756 has been repreſented in its true light, ſuch as it muſt hereafter

after be conſidered by impartial hiſtory; and it could not but gratify me to find my own opinion confirmed by the judgment of a ſtateſman of ſuch abilities and experience as Segur.

NOTE C, p. 43.

It has even been aſſerted that the diſcovery of America would have been more beneficial to Europe, had it been deferred to a later period; and I am not a little inclined to aſſent to that opinion. Had the greater part of Europe been prepared for the diſcovery of the New World, by a high degree of civilization and induſtry, ſhe would neceſſarily have derived more important advantages from the valuable connexions and extenſive commerce to which that event gave riſe. Theſe new objects of induſtry would then have preſented themſelves in their natural order, which has now been in a certain degree inverted. The diſcovery of America was the occaſion of a revolution; and every revolutionary innovation in the ſtate and progreſs of humanity, is more or leſs unfavourable in its effects. We muſt not, however, be ſo unjuſt as to deny that, even as it happened, that great event was highly beneficial to the ſocial exiſtence, and materially contributed to the improvement and welfare of Europe.

NOTE D, p. 59.

The Author is pleaſed to draw a contraſt between the hiſtory of thoſe times and the preſent; which he makes the foundation of a bitter cenſure on the political ſyſtem of

of Europe. "The European powers then coaleſced," ſays he, "to ſupport a revolution in England, to preſerve England from the dangers of Catholiciſm, to add the naval power of Holland and Portugal to that of England. In our times we have ſeen a coalition of Europe to prevent a revolution in France, to maintain the Catholic religion in France, and to cripple the French navy, in order to render her incapable of coping with England." But this apparent contradiction in their maxims and conduct, is explained by the uniformity of their motives, under circumſtances of quite contrary natures. The revolution of 1688 in England, was conſiſtent with the ſecurity of Europe; ſo that foreign powers were impelled by the ſtrongeſt intereſt to give it every poſſible furtherance, whatever might be their opinions of its authors, and whatever their inclinations or averſion to the vanquiſhed or triumphant party. The French revolution in the year 1789, or rather in 1791, before which time there can be no queſtion of a coalition againſt it, was inimical to the ſecurity of Europe; and had there been no other motive for aſſerting the cauſe of monarchy; had moſt of the parties to the coalition been inclined by their ordinary intereſts, rather to deſire the humiliation, than the proſperity of the reigning houſe; yet the ſame intereſt which united the greater part of Europe againſt the STUARTS at the Engliſh revolution, compelled the whole of them to take part with the BOURBONS againſt the revolution in France.

NOTE

NOTE E, p. 78.

FOREIGNERS muſt be carefully admoniſhed not to rely with implicit confidence on the authority of Mirabeau, in forming their ideas of the Pruſſian monarchy under Frederick II. The merit of his ingenious work, which in many reſpects ſtill deſerves great praiſe, is much diminiſhed by three very important defects. 1ſt, The inaccuracy and incompleteneſs of his information on many heads; principally owing to the hurry in which the work was executed, and the levity of Mirabeau in truſting to many incompetent coadjutors. 2dly, His blind attachment to the *phyſiocratic ſyſtem*, which has often induced him to pronounce moſt unjuſtly upon eſtabliſhments and inſtitutions not according with that ſyſtem. 3dly, That it was written for the times; that every part of it was adapted to the circumſtances of the moment; that it was made ſubſervient to a favourite theory, and publiſhed with particular views.

NOTE F, p. 85.

GALANTI'S celebrated work *(Diſcrizzione geografica e politica delle Sicilie)*, of which the firſt part appeared in 1788, and which preſents an invaluable collection of inſtructive obſervations and excellent principles, in every branch of political economy, was written under the auſpices of the Neapolitan government, who provided the Author with materials, and dedicated to the King. Nor was Galanti the only writer who was openly encouraged to aſſert and diffuſe among his countrymen, the true principles of government and legiſlation. Genoveſi

noveſi (who may in ſome reſpect be conſidered as the founder of a new ſchool), Filangieri, Melchior Delphico, Grimaldi, and other philoſophic writers at Naples, were authors of ſyſtems and eſſays which might have done honour to the moſt ingenious of the French Encyclopædiſts. The literature of Italy, during twenty years before the revolution, was a ſplendid commentary on the extraordinary progreſs of the ſcience of political economy in moſt of the Italian ſtates.

NOTE G, p. 92.

FAR be it from me to attempt to juſtify the *ſyſtem of partition*; I regard it as one of the moſt odious and pernicious events of the eighteenth century. It is nevertheleſs, in ſome reſpects, a proof of the exiſtence of a balance of power, and, I will venture to aſſert, a proof of a more benevolent and peaceable ſpirit of politics in Europe. The ſyſtem of partition, when properly conſidered, though it be more repugnant in appearance, is not more unjuſt in reality, than the numerous wars of conqueſt and aggrandizement, of which the three laſt centuries furniſh ſuch a melancholy hiſtory. The idea of aggrandizement without conqueſt, evidently originated from two characteriſtic principles of modern politics. It ſhowed, 1ſt, That no ſingle ſtate could engage in plans of conqueſt, without the concurrence of its neighbours; 2dly, That even when aggrandizement was to be attempted by a violation of juſtice, the way of negotiation was preferred to the deſtructive chance of war. If the diſproportion between Poland and her neighbours had been as great in the fifteenth or

ſixteenth,

ſixteenth, as it was in the eighteenth century ; her independence would have been equally annihilated. The only difference is, that ſhe would then have been expunged from the liſt of nations by a dreadful war, and would have probably been the prey of a ſingle conqueror ; whereas ſhe has now been divided by an arbitrary but peaceful treaty, and a new balance of power has been eſtabliſhed upon her ruins.

NOTE H, p. 97.

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* has ſtated ſome truths on this head, which are ſo remarkable, and ſo conducive to my object, that I cannot refrain from quoting them. "France has never been conquered ſince the irruption of the Franks; ſhe has always been governed by a common ſyſtem of legiſlation, nearly the ſame in all her provinces. Her ſovereigns have given laws to almoſt every civilized people ; and many of the European thrones have been filled by French princes. France, ſince the adoption of her preſent name, has never been occupied by hoſtile armies but partially, and for a ſhort time. Since the eſtabliſhment of the Franks, ſhe has never obeyed a foreign prince. It would be difficult to cite a war in which France did not carry the terror of her arms into the very heart of her enemy's dominions : all the victories of France recorded by hiſtory, are diſtinguiſhed by Spaniſh, Italian, or German names. Her armies returned at the end of every war to maintain the uniformity of the national character, the integrity of her provinces, and the ineſtimable ſyſtem

of

of her frontiers."—Such was France *before the revolution.*

NOTE I, p. 115.

I WILL not venture into the dark labyrinth of the diſturbances in Holland, or touch on the reſpective pretenſions and reſpective errors of the ſeveral factions; but I have a general obſervation to make on thoſe affairs, which is too impartial not to be ſubſcribed to by all parties, whether of the paſt, or preſent time. It was neither the reſtleſs intrigues of the anti-Orange, nor the uſurpations of the Orange party, that formed the chief cauſe of the irreconcilable diſſenſions of the Dutch, the weakneſs of their government, and the gradual decline of their former greatneſs: they were owing to the fundamental, perhaps irremediable errors in the conſtitution of the ſtate. If the changes introduced by Pruſſia and England in 1787, could have effected a permanent reform of that conſtitution (which the internal condition of the country at that time renders very doubtful), they would have been highly beneficial to Holland, and even France would perhaps have gained more by that revolution in the end, than by all her intrigues with the factions ſhe ſupported. A powerful executive government, an effective Stadtholder, would certainly have rendered more eſſential ſervice to the ſtate, than a prince confined and impeded in all his movements, poſſeſſing one day the authority of a king, and another, ſcarcely that of a burgomaſter. If this would have been the real intereſt of Holland, it muſt have been that of her allies likewiſe; for an influence that is only founded on a continuance

tinuance of the weakneſs and diſtractions of the country intended to be benefited, can never be for the advantage of the power that ſeeks to eſtabliſh it. Such was always the influence of France in Holland. Upon the principles purſued by France, there was no chance of recovery from the anarchy in which the country was involved; had ſhe ſucceeded in aboliſhing the Stadtholderſhip, that recovery would have been equally diſtant. The revolution of 1787 opened at leaſt a door to it; and though in itſelf it were only the work of intereſt or paſſion, yet a conſiderate and comprehenſive policy would, even in the ſituation of France, have encouraged it.

NOTE K, p. 118.

One of the greateſt authorities among the political writers of France, has lately given a very decided opinion againſt ſo much of the above reaſoning as relates to that country. Theſe are the remarkable words of Segur: "I am perſuaded there never was a period in which the French monarchy enjoyed a higher degree of conſideration, than in the years between 1783 and 1787; that is, from the peace which concluded the American war, till the revolution in Holland." *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe (par Favier), augmentée de Notes, &c. par L. P. Segur*, vol. ii. p. 97.

NOTE L, p. 119.

The war for the ſucceſſion to the throne of Spain was a ſtriking proof that the true theory of the federal conſtitution had already attained to great maturity. It was not

not the trifling anecdote of the Dutcheſs of Marlborough (which is even now treated by the Author of the *Etat de la France* as a great political event), but the death of the Emperor Joſeph I. that occaſioned the alteration of the ſecret diſpoſitions of the allies. They firſt formed an alliance with Auſtria to prevent the inordinate aggrandizement of France; but the predominance of Auſtria was no leſs an object of jealouſy to them. As ſoon as they had reaſon to fear that the powers of Auſtria and Spain might be united in the ſame hands, they renounced their former plans, and inclined to peace with France. The conduct of England throughout this war, and in the negotiations at Utrecht, as well as in the ſeparate negotiations which preceded the congreſs at that place, were, in every reſpect, agreeable to the principles of a wiſe and enlightened federal policy.

NOTE M, p. 122.

That this was the real ſituation of Auſtria, muſt be evident to every perſon acquainted with the memorable negotiations concerning the firſt partition of Poland. Could any doubt remain on the ſubject, it muſt be completely diſpelled by the moſt incontrovertible teſtimony —the poſitive declaration of Frederick II. In the works left behind him, he has very candidly related the difficulties which the ſyſtem of partition met with at the court of Vienna; he expreſſly ſays, that Auſtria had no alternative but to accede to that project, or to venture a war with Ruſſia and Pruſſia; and he gives us the following paſſage from the anſwer of Prince Kaunitz to the firſt propoſal of the meaſure, as part of his reaſons for

for objecting to it, "That the execution of ſuch a plan would render the ſituation of Europe more critical than ever, and that he adviſed his Majeſty the King of Pruſſia not to engage in any ſuch projects." *Memoires depuis* 1763 *juſqu'à* 1775, *chap.* i. (*Œuvres poſthumes de Frederic* II. *vol.* v.).

NOTE N, p. 125.

It even appears from a memorial of the Comte de Vergennes, which has ſince come to light, that the cabinet of Verſailles was at that time ſeriouſly inclined to renounce the alliance of Auſtria, and to declare war againſt the Emperor, ſhould there be no other means of preſerving Holland. This important paper (printed in the laſt edition of Favier's Memoirs) completely refutes, in my opinion, all that the Author of the *Etat de la France* has ſaid concerning the political ſyſtem of Europe before the revolution.

NOTE O, p. 137.

There is another point of view in this queſtion which I ſhall merely mention, without laying any ſtreſs upon it, becauſe it might very properly be objected, that the advantages alluded to, are only of an accidental, and not of a permanent nature. If two nations are increaſed in the ſame proportion to their former extent, the reſult would be moſt advantageous to that which beſt knows how to cultivate and improve its acquiſition, to conſolidate its new with its old poſſeſſions; to that, in ſhort, whoſe ſyſtem of adminiſtration is the moſt wiſe and regular. Without diſparagement to any other go-

vernment, it may be permitted to aſſert, in conformity to the opinions of the greateſt ſtateſmen in Europe, that in this reſpect likewiſe, the partition of Poland was more uſeful to Pruſſia than any of the powers concerned in it.

NOTE P, p. 142.

I MIGHT in ſtrictneſs have confined myſelf to the firſt partition; for that alone is within the ſphere of my preſent reaſoning. It appeared to me, however, moſt adviſable to conſider the ſubject in its whole extent, in order not to be obliged to recur to it.

At the ſame time it muſt be confeſſed, that neither all the beneficial conſequences of the final diſſolution of Poland, nor the whole of what I have above ſaid, can be referred to the firſt partition; for it is not always fair in politics, to reaſon from the greater to the leſs. It muſt however appear to any one who has conſidered the above arguments, and does not entirely diſapprove them, that many of them, and principally perhaps the moſt important, will ſerve to explain the political bearings of the partition of 1772, as well as the events of 1793 and 1795.

NOTE Q, p. 146.

EVERY reflecting perſon, and doubtleſs every enlightened Ruſſian, will give his unqualified aſſent to the opinion of the Author of the *Etat de la France*, expreſſed in the following words: "The Emperor of Ruſſia would be one of the greateſt and moſt powerful princes of his time,

time, if for the pompous inſcription placed by the flatterers of Catherine on the gates of Cherſon—'*The road to Conſtantinople*,' he would ſubſtitute this more wiſe and glorious ſentence:—'*The ſtrength of this empire ſhall henceforth be employed to govern, and not to aggrandize it*'."

NOTE R, p. 149.

THIS argument is farther ſtrengthened by the reflection, that the agreement which led to the partition of Poland, related to an object in the midſt of the three powers, and concerning which, their intereſts may eaſily be conceived to have been the ſame. But it would be difficult to point out another object within the ſphere of their political exiſtence, in which a ſimilar relation could induce them all three to unite in a common project.

NOTE S, p. 155.

IT is not my intention to aſſert, that a truly wiſe policy would not conſider peace, even with France, as a very deſirable object for England. I am only ſpeaking of what is likely to happen, and eſpecially of what is, and always has been, the caſe. A war with France may, under certain circumſtances, be unavoidable by England; and it will always continue to be thus, until at length the nations of the world ſhall recogniſe their true intereſts, and for ever renounce war of every kind; a period which is probably not very near, which is perhaps never to be ranked among the realities of the world. But with any other continental power, war is, under

every circumſtance, contrary not only to the general and permanent, but to the immediate and temporary intereſts of England. It is not indeed impoſſible to imagine conjunctures, in which the Britiſh miniſtry may be obliged to engage in a continental war, to which France is not a party; but theſe would always reſult from unnatural, conſtrained, and momentary ſituations: ſuch a war would always be a ſacrifice made by England, would be regarded by her as a neceſſary evil, and, in the natural courſe of things, there would always be found means of avoiding it. With France alone (according to the prevailing ideas of the intereſts of nations) war might ſometimes be more advantageous to England than peace; it is only by a war with France that ſhe could have any proſpect of gain, though it were but tranſient and relative.

NOTE T, p. 156.

THE exceptions which might be argued againſt me are either of no importance, or under ſuch circumſtances as render them rather favourable, than contrary to my aſſumptions: for,

1ſt, The negotiations, alliances, and armaments againſt Spain, Auſtria, &c. in the reign of George I. were for the moſt part occaſioned by the intereſts of Hanover. Theſe, it is well known, have never been conſidered as the intereſts of Great Britain; to which, on the contrary, they have frequently been very oppoſite, and with which they have only been occaſionally combined. A Britiſh monarch could hardly act in concert with France as King of England; and nothing of what

paſſed between the treaty of Utrecht and the year 1740, was immediately connected with the national affairs of Britain. The treaty of Hanover (1725), of Seville (1729), and Vienna (1731), were not Britiſh treaties.

2dly, The rupture with Spain in the year 1739, is the only inſtance of a war commenced by Britain in the eighteenth century, of which France was not the object. It is well known that the Britiſh miniſtry were averſe to it, that they yielded reluctantly to the violence of the popular opinion, and conducted it very remiſſly. It made no alteration in the general relations of Europe; and ſoon after loſt itſelf in the following war concerning the Auſtrian ſucceſſion, ſo completely, that at the peace of Aix la Chapelle the objects that occaſioned it were not even mentioned.

3dly, The Ruſſian armament in the year 1790, appeared about to involve England, for the firſt time, in a continental war, in which France was not directly concerned, and in which the intereſts of France were evidently embarked in the ſame cauſe. The object of that armament was moſt undoubtedly a wiſe one, and it certainly was advantageous to Europe: at the ſame time the averſion to any participation in it, was ſo ſtrong in England, that the miniſtry were compelled to relinquiſh their deſigns, and to leave the care of maintaining the balance to the King of Pruſſia alone.

NOTE U, p. 162.

THE writers who may be regarded as the organs of the French government, have not failed to boaſt on

every occaſion of the ſuperiority which the conſciouſneſs of this danger on the part of England appears to afford them. I will adduce an inſtance from one of the moſt eſteemed among them, and quote a paſſage from Favier, which is remarkable, not only becauſe the words are ſo explicit, but on account of the inference he draws from his poſition. After ſpeaking of the projected deſcent in 1756, he continues thus: "In order to keep *Hannibal from the gates*, England muſt and will occupy the only avenue by which we can approach her: ſhe muſt keep poſſeſſion of the ſea, whence every nation will be excluded that does not poſſeſs a powerful navy as well as maritime coaſts. In a word, it is fear alone that renders England ſo haughty, ſo inſolent, and ſo unjuſt toward France: but it is that deliberate reflecting fear which inſpires the weak to profit by all the advantages afforded by the neglect or ignorance of the ſtrong," &c. Upon this paſſage there is the following note by Segur, the laſt editor of theſe Memoirs: "What Favier has here ſaid of the Britiſh miniſtry, has been verified by experience; it is fear that renders them implacable. They know that France, at peace with the continent, and under the direction of a prudent and active government, would ſoon attain the ſuperiority to which Nature has deſtined her, and force England to take her ſtation among powers of the ſecond order."

Theſe are undoubtedly extravagant exaggerations: but when we find the very ſame writers declaiming inceſſantly againſt the deſpotiſm, the ſupremacy, the all-threatening tyranny of the Britiſh government, and advancing

advancing ſuch aſſertions as theſe, we cannot but admire the naïveté of their inconſiſtency.

NOTE V, p. 165.

THIS war was at firſt ſtrongly oppoſed in England, and the adverſaries of the miniſter heaped the ſevereſt cenſures upon it. Since the Spaniſh ſucceſſion war, there had always been a party that would liſten to nothing of what they called Britiſh continental politics; and deſired to ſeparate England entirely from the affairs of the continent. It was, however, remarkable, that as ſoon as any member of this party received a place in the miniſtry, he renounced his former principles. Lord Carteret, one of Walpole's moſt formidable opponents, and among the moſt violent declaimers againſt all foreign politics, changed his opinion when he became miniſter, and defended the conduct of England in the Auſtrian ſucceſſion war, upon grounds of which poſterity will certainly admit the ſolidity: and even the great Chatham, who ſo often had condemned and ridiculed the balance of Europe, and all interference in continental affairs, afterwards publicly confeſſed in Parliament that "America had been conquered in Germany."

NOTE W, p. 166.

THE true cauſe of the war in America was the uncertainty of the French and Engliſh limits there; and the diſpute aroſe upon no trifling object. The point to be decided was, whether France ſhould completely encloſe the poſſeſſions of England, within a ſtraight line

from the river St. Lawrence to the Miſſiſſipi, and thus for ever exclude the induſtrious cultivators of the fineſt colonies in the world, from the fertile countries beyond the weſtern mountains. The right was alike on either ſide; becauſe the matter had never been regulated by treaty. It is always difficult in ſuch caſes to point out the author of the war.

But with regard to Germany, there exiſted no ſuch uncertainty. Whoever has conſidered with attention the tranſactions of that time, will find no reaſon to doubt that England was involved, much againſt her inclination, in the war on the continent. The treaty of 1756, concluded with Pruſſia by George II. was, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word, defenſive. The King of England merely deſired neutrality for his German dominions. If France had not forgotten her own intereſt, and attacked Pruſſia and Hanover; England would have remained an idle ſpectator of this theatre of hoſtility. I only mention this as a fact, for ſuch a neutrality would undoubtedly have been contrary to the true intereſt of England; and it was fortunate for Europe, that the bad policy of France compelled Great Britain to adopt a better ſyſtem.

NOTE X, p. 168.

EVEN coming from them, they appear unfair when we conſider that of all the wars waged between France and England in the eighteenth century, that of 1756 is the only one of which the reſult was immediately prejudicial to the former. For notwithſtanding the victories of Blenheim and Malplaquet, ſo glorious to the allies, it cannot

cannot be aſſerted that the peace of Utrecht was diſadvantageous or humiliating to France.

NOTE Y, p. 182.

The declaration of the firſt National Aſſembly, "that France for ever renounced all wars of conqueſt," made more proſelytes to the revolution in every part of the world than any other, perhaps than all the reſt of their profeſſions. But this declaration, like every thing that was praiſeworthy at the beginning of the revolution, (who would refuſe to acknowledge ſome good amidſt ſuch an infinity of ill?) was not produced by the revolution, but was a conſequence of the ideas and opinions prevalent among all nations before that event. The chiefs of the revolution did nothing but expreſs the ſentiments already generally entertained. That is the extent of their merit and glory: for they were ſo far from realizing the hopes of mankind, that they even deſtroyed in deſperate experiments, all that had been accumulated and attained in half a century; while they held out the golden promiſe of everlaſting peace, they plunged the world in endleſs war.

NOTE Z, p. 192.

The Author even ſays, "In the laſt thirty years the powers of Europe had enjoyed the ſpectacle of France's degradation;" and was it at the end of that period, at the very time when they had attained the object of their wiſhes, that theſe unwiſe ſtateſmen (if any ſuch ever exiſted), who rejoiced in the humiliation of France, found

found it neceſſary to embrue half a world in blood, in order to overwhelm degraded and ruined France with the united forces of all Europe?

NOTE A A, p. 195.

I SHALL touch the more lightly upon it, as I have treated the ſubject at ſome length in a late publication, "On the Origin and Character of the War againſt the French Revolution." I muſt apologize to thoſe who have honoured that work with their attention, for briefly recapitulating in the preſent chapter, the arguments I have there employed, which I am forced to do from the nature of my preſent reaſoning.

NOTE B B, p. 208.

IT will perhaps be objected to me, that there is room to ſuſpect ſome of the nations engaged in this unfortunate war, of having been influenced during the courſe of it, by views of gain or conqueſt. Without inquiring whether, and in what inſtances, the ſuſpicion be well founded; I only have to obſerve, that it can in no reſpect invalidate my preſent reaſoning. My object is only to prove that the war againſt the French revolution did not and could not originate in a league produced by motives of intereſt. The cauſe of the war has not the ſmalleſt connexion with what may have been deſired, projected, or attempted afterwards, when the coaleſced powers, deſtitute of all plan, were a prey to jealouſy, diſſenſions, and miſtruſt. So unfavourable, moreover, is my opinion (as will be more fully ſhown hereafter)

after) of the ſyſtem on which, and the means by which the war was carried on by the allies, that I ſhall not be much diſinclined to admit the poſſibility and even the probability of a temporary departure from its object, and an inconſiderate adoption of meaſures directly contrary to it.

NOTE C C, p. 225.

THE union of the Auſtrian Netherlands with Holland under a prince of the Houſe of Orange, would have anſwered the purpoſe more completely than any other political combination. It is hardly poſſible to enumerate the beneficial conſequences that Europe would have derived from the execution of ſuch a plan. The ſame idea may have ſuggeſted itſelf to many politicians, but it has never been ſo completely argued as by the Author of *La Pruſſe et ſa Neutralité.*

NOTE D D, p. 248.

THAT one of the two might be the ally of France in a war againſt the other (a caſe which certainly cannot be ranked among abſolute impoſſibilities), is a ſuppoſition I have taken no notice of: but in order to ſet the contraſt between the preſent and the former ſtate of Europe in the ſtrongeſt light, we need only to conſider this caſe for a moment: before the revolution, an alliance between France and one of the great powers of Germany, was among the ordinary combinations of politics; whereas at preſent it is ſcarcely poſſible to think on the conſequences

ſequences of ſuch an alliance to the ſtate againſt which it would be directed in the event of a war.

NOTE E E, p. 257.

It is certain, however, that even in the ordinary courſe of things, politics would be led into frequent errors, were it to build too confidently on the preſumption, that the intereſt of every government is a criterion of its conduct. In the firſt place, the true intereſt of a nation is a matter of much extent and uncertainty; the conception of which depends greatly upon the point of view in which it is contemplated, and of courſe upon the ability to chooſe the proper one. It muſt likewiſe be confeſſed, that even the immediate intereſts of ſtates are oftener ſacrificed to private views and paſſions, than is generally imagined; that many nations have miſunderſtood them during centuries, and ſome perhaps have never known them: we muſt therefore go cautiouſly to work when we reaſon on theſe grounds in politics.

NOTE F F, p. 262.

In this enumeration of the principles of perpetual diſcord between France and her neighbours, I have paſſed over one of the moſt active and important, on which, however, I ſhall not lay any ſtreſs, becauſe there prevails much difference of opinion with regard to the extent of its influence; and becauſe it would really be extremely difficult to calculate its future probable effects with any certainty. Who will take upon him to

ſay

ſay whether two ſyſtems ſo thoroughly diſſimilar in themſelves, and in their conſtituent principles, as, on the one hand, *that wherein every conſtitution like the French muſt reſt*, and on the other, *that upon which the ancient ſyſtem of Europe is founded*; who will decide whether theſe ſo oppoſite ſyſtems can exiſt together? And who does not perceive that this eſſential contrariety in the firſt principles of public power, muſt lead to continual uneaſineſs, miſtruſt, and diſturbance? that it muſt be an ever fruitful ſource of open and ſecret oppoſition, of concealed or declared enmity?

NOTE G G, p. 267.

In plain language, theſe fundamental laws may be ſtated thus: 1ſt, No alliance muſt be formed but for the purpoſe of ſecuring the continuance of the aſcendant of France, or of contributing to its farther extenſion in peace; and for organizing the means of oppoſing every attempt to diminiſh it in war. 2dly, No alliance muſt be formed but for the purpoſe of deſtroying the influence of England both in peace and war, in order that there be no longer any rival to the preponderance of France. This is the true and only meaning of both the eſſential principles of our Author; his whole work is a continued commentary on this theme; and he has not even thought it worth while to leave any room for a different explanation.

NOTE H H, p. 274.

It is not a little remarkable, that the Author ſhould have defined the characteriſtics of all conſtrained and unnatural

unnatural alliances ſo clearly and explicitly in the beginning of his chapter on the new ſyſtem of French alliances, as to render it inconceivable how he could, in the next moment, ſpeak of the preſent relations of Switzerland, Holland, &c. in terms of praiſe, nay, of admiration. After ſaying that ſimilarity of intereſt muſt be the foundation of every true alliance, he adds, "Beyond this principle there is nothing but compulſatory ties, which the tyranny of a few nations endeavours in vain to cover with the name of alliances; and to which the weak only ſubmit with the hope of finding in ſome favourable change, the means and opportunity of throwing off the yoke." Can any thing be more ſtriking than this picture? Any man who looks at the preſent ſtate of Europe may put the names to it.

NOTE I I, p. 282.

A TREATY of peace is naturally regulated by all the circumſtances of the reſpective ſituations of the belligerent powers; and in order to judge of it, we muſt conſider it in more than one point of view. It would therefore be a great error to regard every renunciation of conqueſts, as a direct proof of moderation and forbearance; for powerful motives of another kind might compel the conqueror to make theſe conceſſions. It would evidently be ridiculous, for example, if it were to be accounted a merit to the Directory, that it did not inſiſt at the treaty of Leoben, on the ceſſion of the German and Italian diſtricts then occupied by its armies. For it was obvious to all the world, that France could not have maintained thoſe acquiſitions, however

however great her inclination might have been to do ſo.

NOTE K K, p. 301.

THIS act was indeed created with the intention of injuring the Dutch; but its ſubſequent confirmation and maintenance, has been the conſequence of a judicious policy. "What though ſeveral of the proviſions of this celebrated act," ſays Adam Smith, "may have been dictated by national antipathy? they are nevertheleſs as wiſe as if they had been productions of conſummate wiſdom."

NOTE L L, p. 302.

IT is only in one reſpect that the Navigation Act could have promoted the commercial intereſts of Great Britain: as there are few countries ſo advantageouſly ſituated for foreign trade, this law, which operated ſo forcibly to urge the progreſs of a very important branch of England's induſtry, may have had an effect ſomewhat like the temporary monopoly by which the firſt eſtabliſhment of an uſeful manufacturing or commercial undertaking is ſometimes favoured. But ſuppoſing this to have been the caſe, the Navigation Act ought only to have been a temporary, and not permanent ſtatute. That it was not the caſe, is ſufficiently evident, ſince the commerce of Great Britain did not acquire a decided or perceptible preponderance till fifty years after the paſſing of the Navigation Act. In the year 1688, the foreign ſhipping that frequented the ports of England,

was

was half as great as her own; the former being 195,000, and the latter 190,000 tons; which in the year 1696, even fell to 91,000 tons, while the foreign ſhipping ſtill maintained itſelf at 83,000.

NOTE M M, p. 305.

HOLLAND was the only nation in Europe that could have imitated the Engliſh Navigation Act without a dereliction of true policy and ſound reaſon. But although one of the above-mentioned conditions, viz. the advantage of extending her maritime ſyſtem, exiſted almoſt as much in the caſe of Holland, as of England; yet the other was entirely wanting. Holland was not ſufficiently independent of other nations to adopt excluſive meaſures againſt them; ſhe ſtood too much in need of their aſſiſtance to preſcribe burdenſome reſtrictions to them. Moreover, the Engliſh Navigation Act wa conſiderably modified in favour of Holland, by ſubſequent ſtipulations; for ſhe enjoyed the privilege of carrying to England, as her own produce, all articles of merchandiſe brought from Germany down the Rhine.

NOTE N N, p. 315.

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* even goes ſo far as to make it the object of a diſtinct charge againſt the Engliſh, that they labour with unremitted aſſiduity in purſuit of eſtabliſhments in hitherto unexplored regions. "Countries hardly known to Europe," ſays he, "have received Engliſh names; and others yet undiſcovered await Engliſh appellations."—"In the eaſtern parts of Aſia, her diſcoverers examine every coaſt; her agents

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ſubject all the maritime diſtricts to her commerce, and propoſe her friendſhip to the princes they belong to." "In Africa we behold a ſimilar ſpectacle—travellers inflamed with the thirſt of diſcovering countries yet unknown to the traffic of Europeans, traverſe that continent in all directions, periſh there, and are followed by ſucceſſors impatient to replace them; all of them feeding their inſatiable employers with the ſplendid hope of procuring them the priority of commercial intercourſe with nations richer than the dominions of Montezuma, and cities more extenſive and populous than London."

All this is perfectly true; but who would ever have expected that the enterpriſing ſpirit, the unremitted exertions, the ſucceſsful labours of a great people in the diſcovery of unexplored regions: theſe beſt titles to fame and honour, theſe benefits conferred on all nations, and on all poſterity: who would have ſuſpected that theſe, and with theſe the courage and devotion of individuals, would be made the ſubjects of accuſation and reproach?

NOTE OO, p. 316.

It is conſtantly aſſerted in all French manifeſtos and publications, that the Engliſh are indebted to treachery for all the Eaſt and Weſt Indian poſſeſſions taken from the Dutch ſince 1795; which trite accuſation has lately been made the ſubject of official articles in the Paris papers. It is not worth the while to enter here into a minute refutation of them. A judicious reader will

 find

find the following brief obſervations ſufficient: 1ſt, When the eſtabliſhed conſtitution of any country is ſubverted by a violent revolution, which expels its former government; and particularly when that revolution is accompliſhed by a foreign power, it muſt, upon every principle of right, be permitted to ſuch of its ſubjects and officers, as find themſelves beyond the reach of the new authority (as for example, the governors, &c. of the Dutch poſſeſſions in India), to adhere to their former government and conſtitution. And ſhould there remain no proſpect of their re-eſtabliſhment, thoſe officers, &c. (provided they have not voluntarily and explicitly recogniſed the new government) are fully at liberty to put themſelves under the protection of a nation that ſupports their former ſovereign, rather than ſubmit to the power that expelled him, or to the new government which they conſider as an uſurpation, founded upon the authority of ſtrangers. Such a conduct is ſo far from deſerving the name of treachery, that it is, on the contrary, the only one which is conſonant with integrity and principle. It is a conſequence of every violent revolution, that conſcience is left the only arbiter of right and wrong; and there can be no treachery where conſcience is obeyed. 2dly, It is no leſs unjuſt to impute ſuch acquiſitions as a crime to a nation. After the revolution in Holland, England had no alternative but either to leave the Dutch ſettlements in the hands of the French, or, what was the ſame thing, of the Batavian government, or to take poſſeſſion of them herſelf: ſhe naturally choſe the laſt; and this proceeding was not in any reſpect leſs juſtifiable than a regular conqueſt in a juſt war. The true authors of the injury which

which Holland ſuſtained, were thoſe who devoted that country to a fatal revolution, and thereby condemned England to treat it as an enemy.

It is not a little ſurpriſing to find the accuſation of treachery advanced againſt the governors and officers of the Dutch ſettlements, and the charge of perfidy applied to the Britiſh miniſtry, by the advocates of a government, indebted for moſt of its conqueſts to the co-operation, to give it no harſher name, to the co-operation of men who favoured and aſſiſted the plans and enterpriſes of a foreign power againſt their lawful ſovereign. Let every friend of juſtice in or out of France, aſſign the proper term to ſuch co-operation, and give a name to the conduct of thoſe who made uſe of it.

NOTE P P, p. 318.

The only exception to this is, where gold and ſilver mines conſtitute the ſole productions of foreign ſettlements. Spain and Portugal were the only powers who derived a direct revenue from their American provinces. But even theſe extraordinary caſes are no exception to the general principle; for their revenues, inſtead of adding at all to the ſtrength of their governments, were the immediate cauſes of the decline and weakneſs of both.

NOTE Q Q, p. 322.

In order to enſure the commerce of Europe with India and China, it is now become abſolutely neceſſary,

that the peninſula of Hindoſtan be governed by a great military power capable of protecting it. Were this power in any way annihilated, the whole connexion muſt neceſſarily be loſt for a long time. In the preſent ſtate of things, the dominion of the Engliſh in the Eaſt Indies is not only the foundation of their own trade, but ſecures that of all other nations; and as the commerce of the Eaſt Indies is become an object of the firſt importance to every people, the empire of the Britiſh in that part of the world ought and muſt be conſidered as a general benefit; and is in a certain ſenſe to be regarded as a common property.

NOTE R R, p. 329.

Besides theſe cauſes of the general complaint againſt England on account of the monopoly of colonial produce imputed to her, there is another, which, on a cloſer examination of the public opinion, will perhaps appear to conſtitute a more important part of it. The conſumption of colonial produce has increaſed in a very great degree throughout all Europe during the laſt twenty years; a circumſtance which the enlightened ſtateſman will find no difficulty to explain, nor any reaſon to deplore. The dependance of the conſuming nations on the induſtry of the colonial traders, is therefore conſiderably increaſed, and the drain of ſpecie occaſioned by the importation of that produce is every where more ſenſible. This is not the place to examine how far ſuch increaſed conſumption, and the conſequent loſs of ſpecie, are poſitive evils; and I ſhall not trouble the reader with the reaſons which induce me to believe,

believe, that, according to the true principles of political economy, they do not deſerve the appellation. But the greater part of the ſtateſmen and politicians of Europe certainly do conſider that increaſed conſumption, and what they term the unfavourable balance reſulting from it, as a ſerious evil which cannot be too ſtrenuouſly combated. At the ſame time they daily perceive that all their complaints, exhortations, and projects; that even their active contraventions, their heavy duties, their prohibitions, and their inceſſant reſearches after imaginary ſubſtitutes; they behold all theſe efforts not only unſucceſsful, but even contributing to ſtrengthen the propenſity they are ſo deſirous of counteracting. Nothing therefore is more natural, than that a kind of reſentment, a kind of hatred, ſhould ariſe againſt thoſe nations which are engaged in the colonial trade, on account of their ſituation, their wealth, and their maritime poſſeſſions; becauſe they are conſidered as the authors of the (imaginary) impoveriſhment of Europe, and as enemies to the general welfare of all conſuming countries. And ſince England has long poſſeſſed the largeſt ſhare of that trade; ſince England has, during the laſt five or ſix years, attained to the almoſt excluſive enjoyment of it; it is not ſurpriſing that this ſhort-ſighted jealouſy, this blind and groundleſs hatred, ſhould be concentrated entirely againſt England. This is the general ſtate of reaſoning on the ſubject.

It is a great misfortune for mankind, that their imaginary wants of ſugar, coffee, tea, cotton, &c. have gradually undermined the ſtrength of every nation not addicted to commerce; but the Engliſh nation ſells more of

of thoſe articles, than all the others taken together; therefore that nation is more reſponſible than any other for this always increaſing misfortune. Ignorance of the true principles and elements of national wealth, produced the major of this remarkable ſyllogiſm; experience has afforded the minor, and the blindneſs of prejudice has drawn the concluſion.

NOTE S S, p. 330.

When the Dutch Eaſt India Company were in the excluſive and undiſturbed poſſeſſion of the ſpice iſlands, it would have been perfectly eaſy for them, according to the general opinion, to have maintained an arbitrary price of their produce, which had become abſolutely neceſſary to Europe. They nevertheleſs conſidered it a thing ſo impoſſible, that, fearful of being beat out of all the markets, notwithſtanding their great advantages, they had recourſe to the barbarous meaſure of wantonly rooting out part of the plants, and deſtroying part of the produce! Yet even theſe barbarous meaſures did not prevent their gradual decline.

NOTE T T, p. 333.

I will even go ſo far as to aſſert, that in thoſe very nations which take an active part in general commerce, it is for the immediate advantage of the conſumer, and thus far for the immediate advantage of the community, rather to purchaſe Eaſt and Weſt India produce at a low price from Engliſh merchants, than at a high one from their own. But it muſt be confeſſed that in thoſe countries, foreign commerce may have become ſuch an important

portant branch of the general welfare, as to require the immediate intereſt of the conſumer to be ſacrificed to its maintenance and extenſion.

NOTE U U, p. 352.

I SHALL take this opportunity of expoſing one of the moſt ſtriking contradictions of which the Author of the *Etat de la France* has been guilty. After having exhauſted his ingenuity in the firſt part of his work, to ſhew that England was the only nation ſtrongly intereſted in the beginning, continuance, and protraction of the preſent war; he proves in a following chapter, of which the object is to repreſent the reſources of Britain in the moſt unfavourable light, that no nation is ſo great a loſer by the war, as the very one to which he had before aſſerted that it was abſolutely neceſſary.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 123, line 14, *for* Pruſſia, *read* Ruſſia.
316, the aſteriſk in the firſt line refers to the *ſecond* note at foot; and the mark † in the 11th line, refers to the Note O O at the end.
345, — 21, *for* controvert, *read* counteract.